PLAY METER Magazine

VOLUME 22, No. 7 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY JUNE 1996

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News Notes

✓ AMOA REACTS TO PHILIP MORRIS' CALL FOR VENDING BAN

The Amusement and Music Operators Association has responded to Philip Morris' recent call for a ban on cigarette vending machines, saying the move is a "public relations ploy" that will have a negligible impact on the purchase of tobacco products by youth. The tobacco company has said it would agree to the ban, as well as a number of proposed regulations on advertising, if the Food and Drug Administration is not given the authority to regulate tobacco as a consumer product. U.S. Tobacco has joined with Philip Morris for the proposed ban.

AMOA has responded with a release sent to consumer press organizations, which says that while only 1.4 percent of all cigarette sales are made through vending machines approximately 80 percent of the trade association's members operate an estimated 400,000 vending machines. Of those machines, over 91 percent are located in age-restricted locations. The ban, according to AMOA, would eliminate some 10,000 jobs from predominantly small businesses. Additionally, AMOA has long supported the use of lock-out devices as part of age restriction enforcement.

✓ TOURNAMENT VERSION OF GOLDEN TEE 3D GOLF IS HERE!

The long wait is over. The International Tournament System version of *Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3D Golf* video game from Incredible Technologies began shipping late last month with an initial production run of 275 dedicated tournament units. Since the system debuted at AMOA '95, a series of five successful test tournaments on 24 prototype units were conducted in the Chicago area with the help of five local operators and American Vending Sales.

According to Michael Hanson, vice president and legal counsel for Incredible Technologies and the ITS team leader: "We learned quite a bit from players and operators while running the tournaments." The game's PC board was redesigned to accommodate the communications necessary for transferring data via modem through a phone line. Memory was added to store more golf courses and all of the tournament statistics sent to the ITS each night. Other new features include a real-time clock, voltage monitor, and flash memory that allows messages and graphics to be downloaded through the modem to the screen. The game cabinet has an extra deep control panel with a 25" monitor tipped at an angle, custom LED display sign on top, and pull-out drawer system for easy access to all electronics.

The first national tournament will run June 14-30, with over $20,000 in prizes awarded to more than 295 winners. Distributors scheduled to handle the first shipments include American Vending Sales, Atlas Distributing, Cleveland Coin Machine, Pioneer Sales & Service, Shaffer Distributing, and World Wide Distributing. For more details, contact Incredible Technologies, (847) 870-7027, or Bulldog Amusements, (206) 869-6400.

✓ CHANNEL "M" MOVES INTO FEC ARENA

Entertainment/marketing company Channel "M" is involved in a new project of nationwide turnkey promotional programs targeted to family entertainment centers. Participating centers will receive monthly free premiums, incentives, prizes, samples, coupons, and customized decorations. Providing guests with high-end promotional materials is designed to add to a location's excitement. The company has in-store video channels in 100 game rooms around the country that air music videos, sports highlights, bloopers, cartoons, and other features that attract customers. To learn more, contact channel "M", (312)360-1300; fax (312) 461-9142.

✓ LOUISIANA GAMING REGULATION UP IN THE AIR

With the passage of legislation authorizing a single gaming commission in Louisiana, a number of questions regarding the regulation of video poker remain unanswered. State police officials say they are continuing to monitor the central computer and perform routine regulatory activities. However, administrative procedures are being put on hold until the new commission is seated. Former state appeals judge Hillary Crane has been appointed to head the commission, which will oversee casino, riverboat, and video gaming. A local option referendum on all three forms of gaming is set for the fall. Separate commissions remain for the constitutionally protected forms of gaming, including lottery and horse racing.

✓ MICRO MFG. OFFERS SPECIAL SUMMER PROGRAM

Micro Mfg., the LaVergne, Tenn.-based manufacturer of the *Magical Touch* countertop, has introduced a new factory financing program that allows operators to purchase five or 10 *Magical Touch* machines in any cabinet style with no down payment and no other payment for 120 days. The 18-month plan translates to 15 payments.

In addition, a bonus accompanies any 10-machine order: unique custom ad screen programs for free ($500 total value). The operator supplies camera-ready, full-color artwork promoting their company (logo, name, phone) and the factory scans it into the advertising screen shown during the game's attract mode. The screen is rotated among other user-entered ad screens but needs no setup and cannot be removed. According to Micro, in this way the machines help operators get new locations. A half-price custom ad screen program is available for a five-machine purchase. Contact Micro, (800) 227-6135 for more information; the special lasts through Aug. 31.

✓ INDUSTRY BIDS FOND FAREWELL TO LOU SINGER

He was a hard worker and a shrewd businessman who left an indelible imprint on the coin machine industry. Lou Singer, chairman of Central Distributing in Omaha, Neb., passed away May 15 after a long battle against leukemia. He was 74. Turn to "In Memory" (pg. 119) for a an overview of his career and comments from his many friends in the industry.

✓ FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES

A number of companies have announced personnel appointments: Island Design has appointed **Mary Hermanson** to the post of marketing manager; Micro Mfg. has named **Peter Casas** as its marketing director for the Western region; Mondial Distributing has promoted **Mike Publicover** to vice president of the New England region; Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties has named **Saul Gamoran** as executive vice president; Atlas Distributing-Chicago has added **Joe Franta** to its staff; Capcom Coin-Op has appointed **Satinder Bhutani** as Western regional sales manager; Interactive Light Inc. has appointed **Jeff Walker** as chief operating officer; Mars Electronics Intl. has named **Frank Mars** to be president of sales and marketing for the Americas and **Stuart Chambers** to be vice president of sales and marketing for the United Kingdom; and new company Creative Electronics and Software has promoted **Ed Suchocki** to vice president of engineering and named **Jim Ross** as vice president of manufacturing. Look for more details on these announcements next month in "Who's News." ▲

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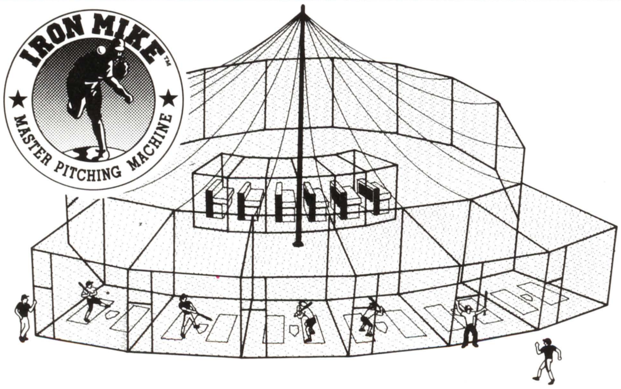

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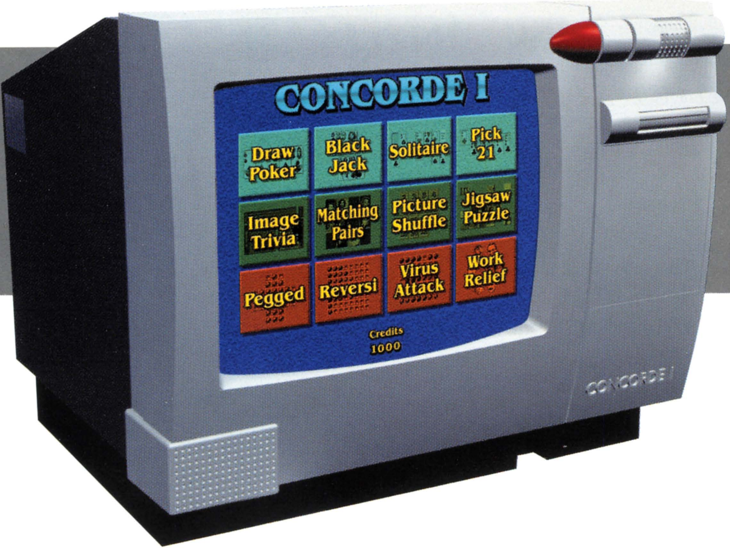
CONCORDE I
Draw Poker
Black Jack
Solitaire
Pick 21
Image Trivia
Matching Pairs
Picture Shuffle
Jigsaw Puzzle
Pegged
Reversi
Virus Attack
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Credits
1000
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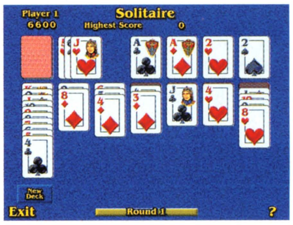
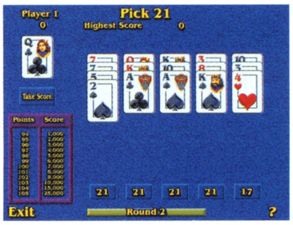
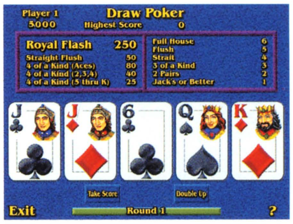
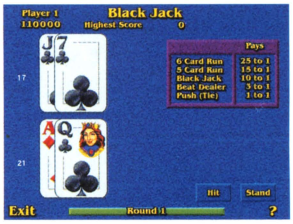

Player 1
6600
Solitaire
Highest Score
0
New Deck
Exit
Round 1
?


Player 1
0
Pick 21
Highest Score
0
Take Score
21
21
21
21
17
Exit
Round 2
?

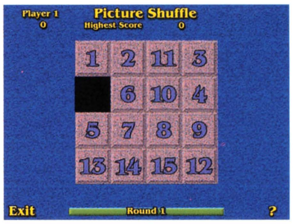
Points	Score
94	1,000
95	2,000
96	3,000
97	4,000
98	5,000
99	6,000
100	7,000
101	8,000
102	9,000
103	10,000
104	15,000
105	25,000

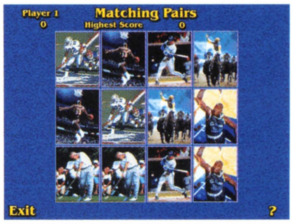

Player 1
5000
Draw Poker
Highest Score
0
Take Score
Double Up
Exit
Round 1
?

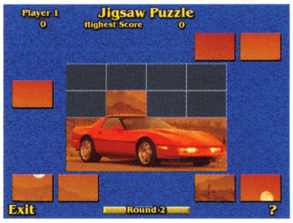
Royal Flash	250	Full House	6
Straight Flush	50	Flush	5
4 of a Kind (Aces)	80	Strait	4
4 of a Kind (2,3,4)	40	3 of a Kind	3
4 of a Kind (5 thru K)	25	2 Pairs	2
		Jack's or Better	1

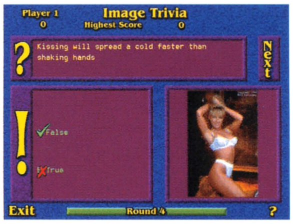

Player 1
110000
Black Jack
Highest Score
0
17
21
Hit
Stand
Exit
Round 1
?

	Pays
6 Card Run	25 to 1
5 Card Run	15 to 1
Black Jack	10 to 1
Beat Dealer	3 to 1
Push (Tie)	1 to 1

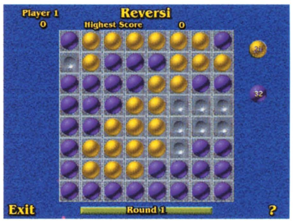

Player 1
0
Picture Shuffle
Highest Score
0
1
2
11
3
6
10
4
5
7
8
9
13
14
15
12
Exit
Round 1
?

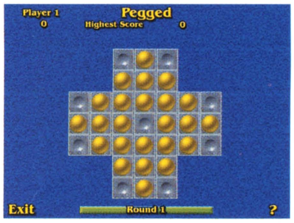

Player 1
0
Matching Pairs
Highest Score
0
Exit
?

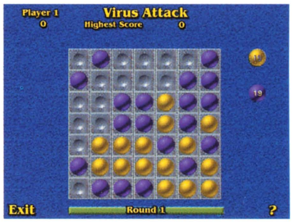

Player 1
0
Jigsaw Puzzle
Highest Score
0
Exit
Round 2
?

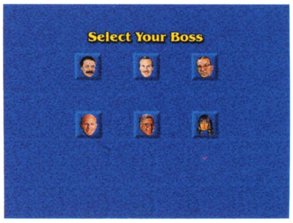

Player 1
0
Image Trivia
Highest Score
0
Next
False
True
Exit
Round 4
?

Kissing will spread a cold faster than shaking hands


Player 1
0
Reversi
Highest Score
0
32
Exit
Round 1
?


Player 1
0
Pegged
Highest Score
0
Exit
Round 1
?


Player 1
0
Virus Attack
Highest Score
0
19
Exit
Round 1
?


Select Your Boss

VOLUME 22, NO. 7 • JUNE 1996

53 Family Entertainment

If you think you've heard the last word on the subject of family entertainment centers, check out our "must read" special section devoted to this timely topic. Visit with consultants Michael Getlan and Frank Seninsky, Fun Challenge and Jeepers! FECs, go-kart tracks and laser tag systems. That's not all, the IAFEC and AMOA share association views.

86 Kiddie Ride Guide

Kiddie rides have evolved from the old mechanical horse of yesteryear to the licensed, custom, and interactive rides of today. Once a handful of companies exhibited them at trade shows; now nearly 30 companies produce rides that suit every kind of location. Learn more about this growing market, available models, and the National Kiddie Ride Association.

127 Management: What's it worth t'ya?

You've spent time building your company, its reputation in the community, the good will and trust of its customers. Now you may be ready to sell, but how do you place a fair market value on the business? While it is no easy task, our management expert can set you on the right path with data and charts to help simplify this complex situation.

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Cover

Kiddie Rides U.S.A. keeps on truckin' with a new ride fashioned after the Mighty Tonka Dump Truck. Company staff, (l-r): Joe DeMarsico, Caferina Meli, Logan Crabtree, Lowell Ades, Robert Cohen, Stuart Heller, Nancy Burgener, Michael Evans, Manuela Crilly, Brian Carasik by the ride and its namesake.

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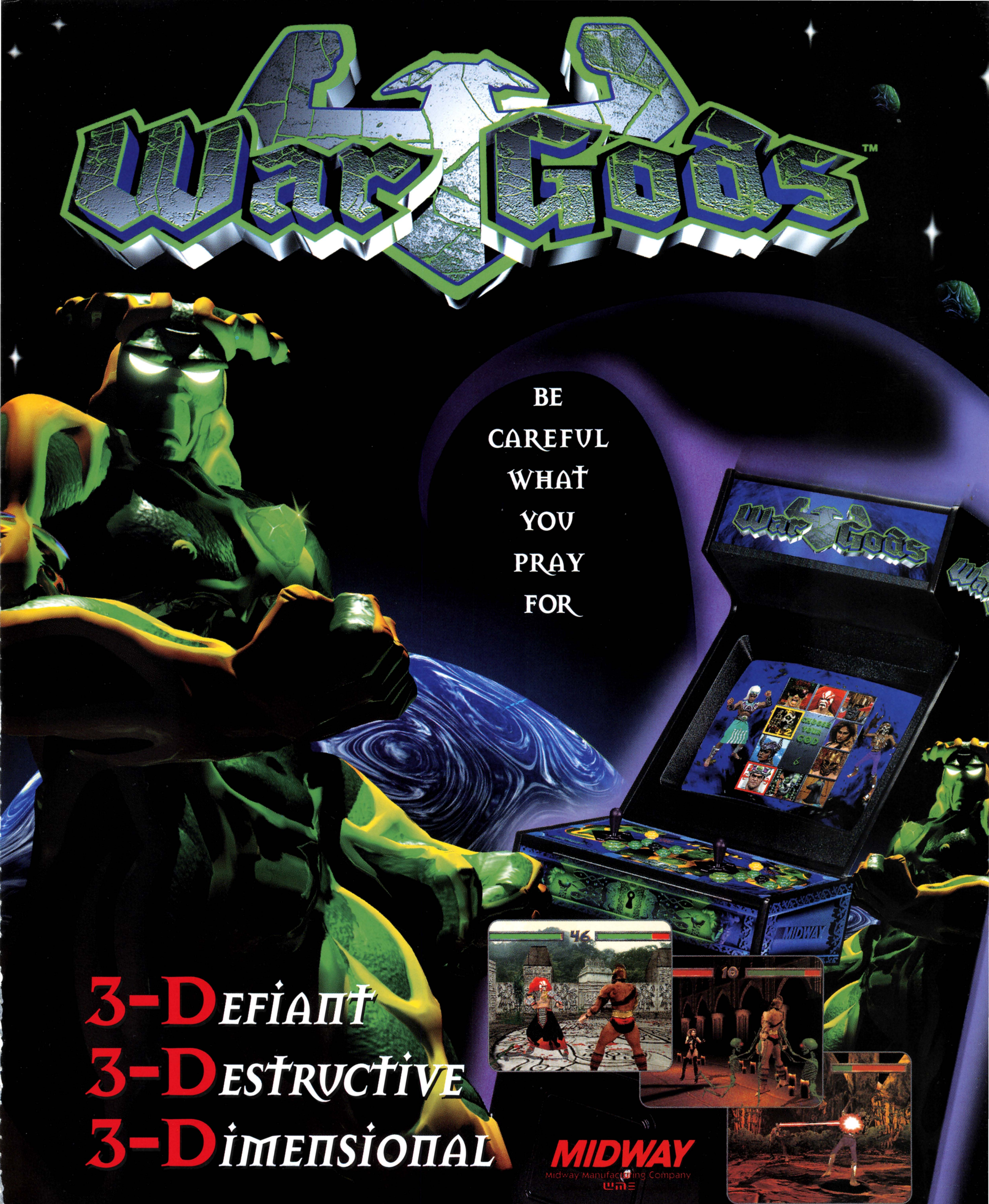
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Do unto others...

I recently attended a marketing workshop cosponsored by the IAFEC. Although I don't operate FECs, I feel like I walked away with a little better understanding about what operators of FECs are facing today. There were sessions about advertising, dealing with the media, demographics, and much more. But one of the most interesting, and one that drew the most discussion among attendees, was the session on employee relations.

A featured speaker, Barry Eigen, had the audience rolling in their seats while getting a very important message across. He is the author of a book called "How to Think Like a Boss and Get Ahead at Work." His focus was on how to stimulate initiative and improve morale. His opening story recounted his first job at an exclusive restaurant. He set up the scene of a young boy balancing the largest tray of dishes to be carried down a flight of stairs. His theory was that the more dishes on the tray, the fewer trips up the stairs. Yes, the inevitable happened when the dishes came crashing down the stairs into the main dining room. Elegantly dressed diners had everything from lemon mousse to ketchup dripping from every surface available.

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

He figured he was going to be fired. But when his boss called him into the office, it wasn't to fire him but to assure him that his job was still there. Years later Barry ran into his former boss and asked him why he kept him on after the mishap. "Everyone makes mistakes. Those who learn from them make better employees. I figured you had made one that you were sure to learn from!"

After Barry's stunning speech, conversations among the attendees centered on employee relations. Barry's theory was that if you treat your employees like you expect a lot from them, you'll get a lot from them. If you demean them at every turn and act like a vulture waiting to criticize them every chance you get, soon you will have molded your employees into exactly what you expected. They will certainly be unmotivated at the least. It's a theory that makes sense.

Some of the FEC owners attending the seminar were complaining about their workers, while others were praising theirs. The difference turned out to be not in the workers themselves, but in how they were treated. Those who found ways to motivate their employees found the loyalty and sense of pride gratifying.

Everyone with a business is faced with employee relations. Some feel that it's their business and their needs come first. There's the owner who asks employees to do personal projects with no extra pay or time off. There's the manager who stalks his employees trying to catch them doing something wrong.

But then there's the boss who is not afraid to pitch in and work alongside of the employees. If he wants them at work at 6:00 in the morning, you can be sure he's there at quarter til. He's the one who appreciates that these are the people who make his business successful.

He's also the one with the employees who know they are appreciated and are willing to go that extra mile for the company. Crushing the enthusiasm from top employees can be as devastating for the business as it is for the employee. When coming to work for your employees means nothing more than a paycheck, it's time for you to take a critical look at how you are treating your people and maybe make changes.

One operator said the morale in his location among his employees improved dramatically when he gave his people more say in how the schedule was made. Before, he simply put names down for certain hours and would not make changes. If an employee asked to make a change it was out of the question. Now, he takes personal requests into consideration and allows employees to find a replacement if they can't work the appointed hours. "I used to beat my head against the wall trying to get these people into work. Now it seems that there is no problem and I'm less involved! Who ever would have thought it would turn out like this?"

You have a goal for your company. If your employees know that goal and you allow them to get the job done, being flexible if necessary, believe me the job will get done faster and better and your company in the long run will be the beneficiary of your attitude. ▲

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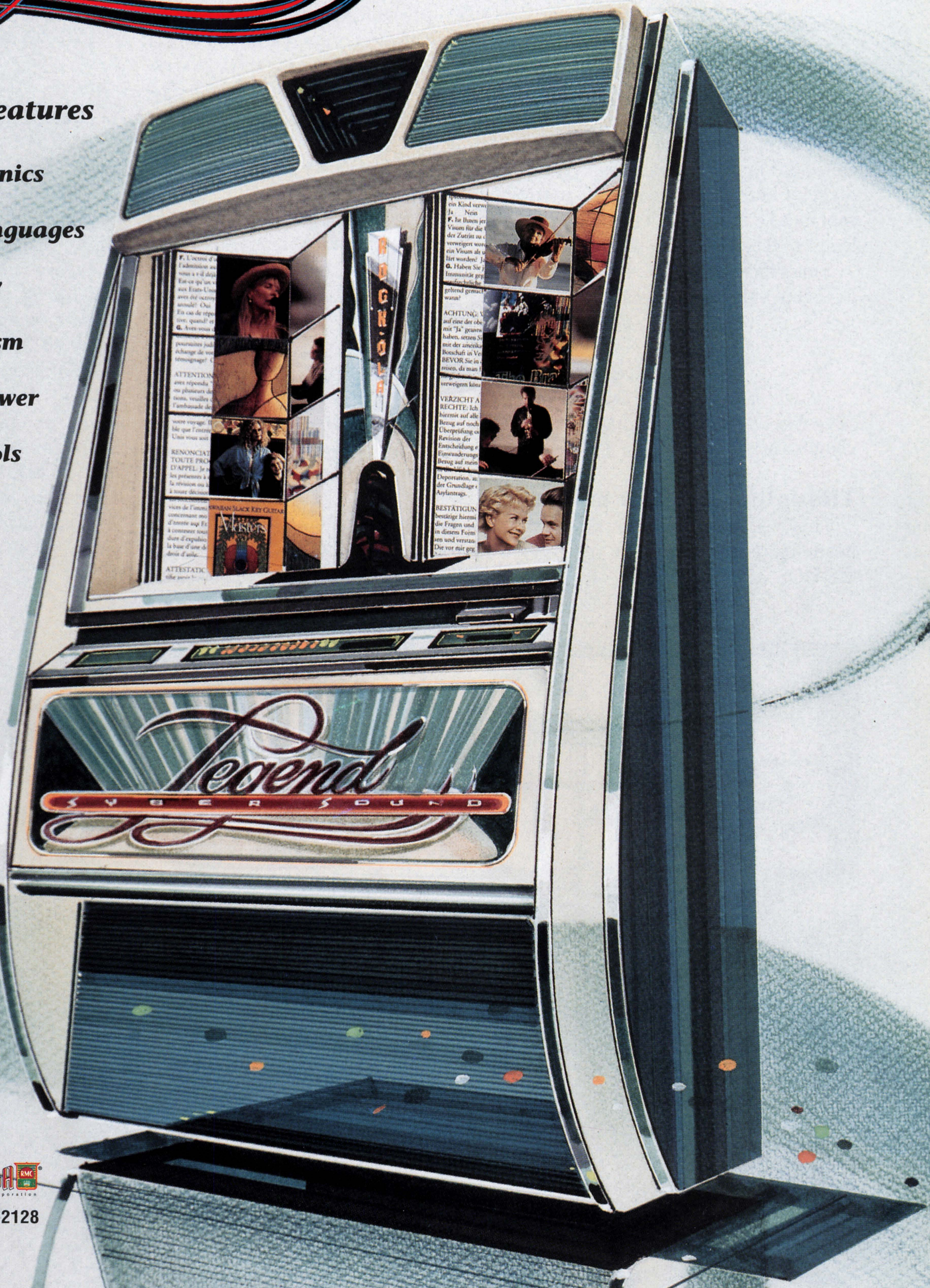

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Looking for Steve

I used to subscribe to your magazine many years ago when I worked for a company out of Orlando, Fla., called Sterling Coin Operated by Steve Siegel. I know is it most likely a long shot, but I'd like to know if anyone has heard of this gentleman lately.

I miss those years that I spent working in the video game business.

Chip Henson
Marriott
Kissimmee, FL

[If you know where Chip can find Steve Siegel, let us know, and we'll forward the information on to Chip.]

Thoughts on the Internet

I enjoyed your article on your Internet thoughts. My comment is regarding MS-DOS software. There are many DOS-based browsers available so please do not turn your back on this still very viable operating system.

DOS browsers are not memory pigs like Windows-based programs. Plus no expensive upgrades are necessary to use these programs. On any given computer DOS browsers tend to be faster than Windows browsers, as well as being more reliable regarding system lockups and crashes.

Don't forget that Windows is being run via DOS. Yes, even Windows '95!

Richard Bonner
From the Internet

Live coverage of ACME

I am so happy that there is someone out there like yourself driving this forward because the rest of the arcade industry seems not to be able to innovate so well.

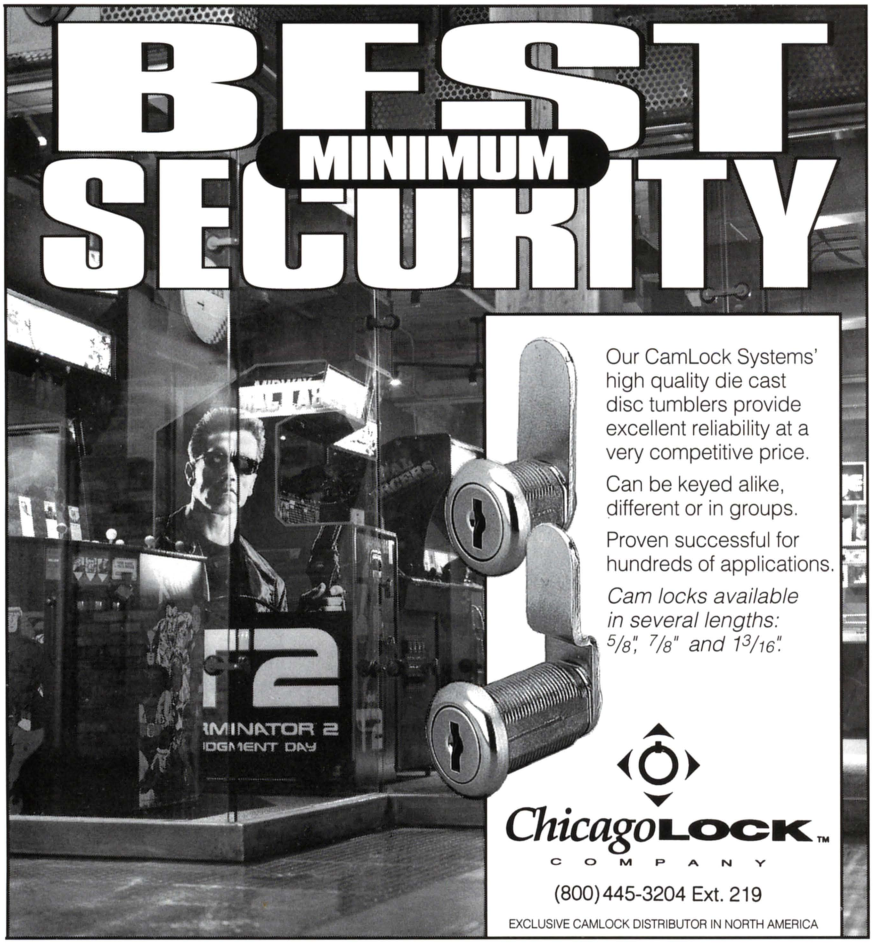
I do like the page however and have seen a lot of good stuff on it. I am an operator here in the United Kingdom, and it was nice to read about the show the day it happened instead of in April's publication of the trade magazines.

Keep up the good work.

Dave Nicolaou
From the Internet

[Dave is referring to the live coverage from ACME on Randy Fromm's AIM, where Play Meter has its home. It was interesting to us too because we could see from questions what people were interested in. The two things asked about more often than anything else were laser tag and driving games. After receiving the requests for information, our editorial staff scattered around the show floor and wrote brief outlines of the companies involved. We also shot photos which appeared on the page. I'm sure we'll do it again. We thank Randy for the tremendous job he's doing with AIM. We're glad to be a part of it. The e-mail address for AIM is aim@thegroup.net; Play Meter's e-mail address is playmeter@aol.com.]

▲



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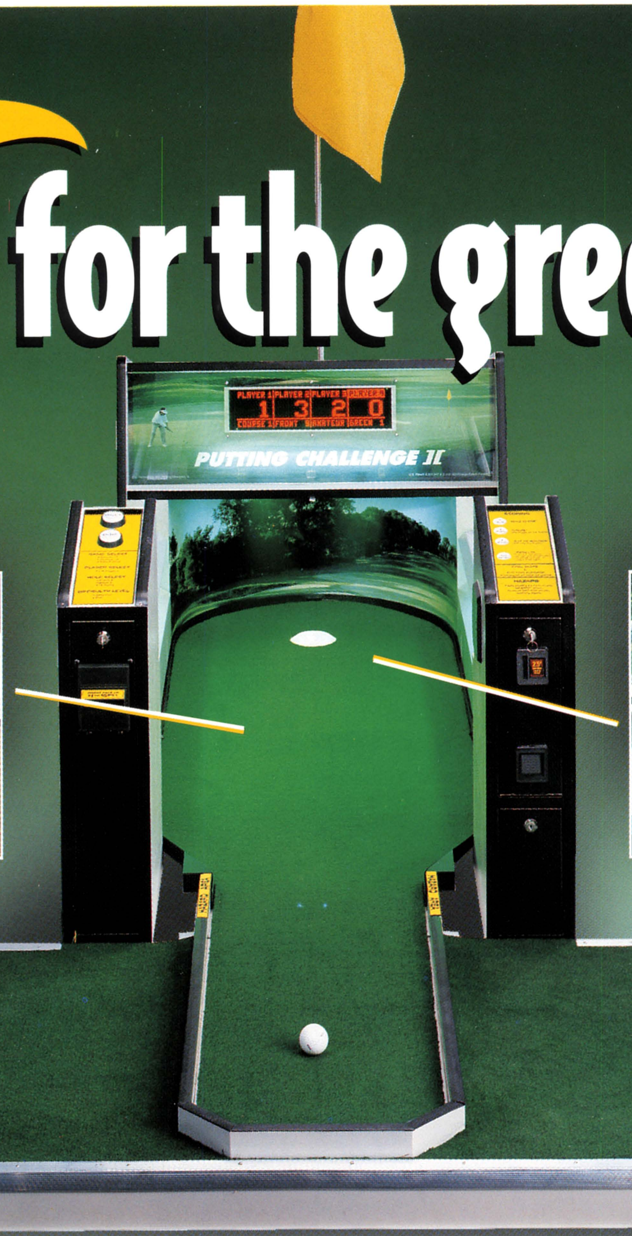
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Equipment Poll

VIDEO & PINBALL COMBINED

	GAME	MO. ON CHART	MO. IN TOP 10
1.	Daytona USA *(Sega)*	21	21
2.	Area 51 *(Atari)*	6	6
3.	Cruis'n USA *(Midway)*	19	19
4.	Time Crisis *(Namco)*	2	2
5.	Megatouch IV *(Merit)*	1	1
6.	Alpine Racer *(Namco)*	6	6
7.	Tekken 2 *(Namco)*	8	8
8.	Golden Tee 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	7	1
9.	Attack From Mars *(Bally)*	2	2
10.	Virtua Cop *(Sega)*	15	11
11.	Theatre of Magic *(Bally)*	13	9
12.	COPS *(TWi)*	13	1
13.	Manx TT *(Sega)*	2	1
14.	Soul Edge *(Namco)*	3	2
15.	Sega Rally *(Sega)*	8	2
16.	Indy 500 Twin *(Sega)*	2	*
17.	Virtua Cop 2 *(Sega)*	6	4
18.	Cyber Cycles *(Namco)*	8	4
19.	Megatouch *(Merit)*	8	5
20.	Lucky & Wild *(Namco)*	34	5
21.	Marvel Super Heroes *(Capcom)*	6	1
22.	Killer Instinct 2 *(Midway)*	3	2
23.	Tekken *(Namco)*	16	11
24.	The Addams Family *(Bally)*	51	46
25.	D&D Shadow Over Mystara *(Capcom)*	1	*
26.	Suzuka 8 Hours 2 *(Namco)*	25	19
27.	OutRunners *(Sega)*	32	20
28.	Virtua Fighter 2 *(Sega)*	16	12
29.	Bust-A-Move Again *(Taito)*	5	*
30.	World Cup Soccer *(Bally)*	23	18
31.	Who Dunnit *(Bally)*	4	1
32.	Tournament Solitaire *(Dynamo)*	7	1
33.	World Class Bowling *(Incredible Tech.)*	1	*
34.	Crypt Killer *(Konami)*	2	*
35.	Desert Tank *(Sega)*	3	*
36.	Dirt Dash *(Namo)*	1	*
37.	Point Blank *(Namco)*	10	1
38.	MK3 Ultimate *(Midway)*	6	3
39.	Goldeneye *(Sega)*	1	*
40.	Viper Phase 1 *(Fabtek)*	7	1
41.	Star Trek: TNG *(Williams)*	29	23
42.	Suzuka 8 Hours *(Namco)*	25	18
43.	Pinball Magic *(Capcom)*	7	*
44.	Road Show *(Williams)*	18	11
45.	Solitaire Challenge *(Dynamo)*	23	10
46.	Magical Touch *(Micro)*	4	2
47.	Zombie Raid *(Am. Sammy)*	4	1
48.	Killer Instinct *(Midway)*	17	12
49.	Lethal Enforcers II *(Konami)*	25	5
50.	T-MEK *(Atari)*	18	3
51.	Congo *(Williams)*	2	*
52.	Jack-Bot *(Williams)*	6	1
53.	Raiden DX *(Fabtek)*	14	8
54.	Open Ice *(Midway)*	5	1
55.	The Flintstones *(Williams)*	16	4
56.	Twilight Zone *(Bally)*	34	22
57.	Big Hurt *(Premier)*	5	1
58.	Indianapolis 500 *(Bally)*	7	3
59.	The Shadow *(Williams)*	14	5
60.	Shaq Attaq *(Premier)*	14	10

VIDEO DEDICATED

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Daytona USA *(Sega)*	9.36	1246
2.	Area 51 *(Atari)*	8.91	335
3.	Cruis'n USA *(Midway)*	8.87	1107
4.	Time Crisis *(Namco)*	8.86	110
5.	Alpine Racer *(Namco)*	8.44	346
6.	Virtua Cop *(Sega)*	8.13	736
7.	COPS *(TWi)*	8.00	343
8.	Manx TT *(Sega)*	8.00	104
9.	Sega Rally *(Sega)*	7.88	334
10.	Indy 500 Twin *(Sega)*	7.86	93
11.	Virtua Cop 2 *(Sega)*	7.86	299
12.	Cyber Cycles *(Namco)*	7.82	365
13.	Lucky & Wild *(Namco)*	7.64	1100
14.	Killer Instinct 2 *(Midway)*	7.43	143

VIDEO KITS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Megatouch IV *(Merit)*	8.75	56
2.	Tekken 2 *(Namco)*	8.38	452
3.	Golden Tee 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	8.20	281
4.	Soul Edge *(Namco)*	7.92	159
5.	Megatouch *(Merit)*	7.77	411
6.	Marvel Super Heroes *(Capcom)*	7.55	259
7.	Tekken *(Namco)*	7.43	696
8.	D&D Shadow Over Mystara *(Capcom)*	7.40	36
9.	Bust-A-Move Again *(Taito)*	7.25	141
10.	Tournament Solitaire *(Dynamo)*	7.14	150
11.	World Class Bowling *(Incredible Tech.)*	7.14	29
12.	Point Blank *(Namco)*	7.00	300
13.	MK3 Ultimate *(Midway)*	6.96	270
14.	Viper Phase 1 *(Fabtek)*	6.83	190
15.	Magical Touch *(Micro)*	6.67	158
16.	Zombie Raid *(Am. Sammy)*	6.63	76
17.	Raiden DX *(Fabtek)*	6.42	307
18.	Open Ice *(Midway)*	6.38	121
19.	Bust-A-Move *(Taito)*	6.30	445
20.	Lethal Enforcers *(Konami)*	6.29	1591
21.	Strikers 1945 *(Worldwide)*	6.25	14
22.	Fighting Vipers *(Sega)*	6.17	118
23.	D&D Tower of Doom *(Capcom)*	6.11	452
24.	Twin Eagle II *(Seta)*	6.00	4
25.	Raiden II *(Fabtek)*	5.93	774

PINBALLS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Attack From Mars *(Bally)*	8.20	107
2.	Theatre of Magic *(Bally)*	8.03	670
3.	The Addams Family *(Bally)*	7.42	2724
4.	World Cup Soccer *(Bally)*	7.24	860
5.	Who Dunnit *(Bally)*	7.20	161
6.	Goldeneye *(Sega)*	6.88	22
7.	Star Trek: TNG *(Williams)*	6.78	1396
8.	Pinball Magic *(Capcom)*	6.73	113
9.	Road Show *(Williams)*	6.71	616
10.	Congo *(Williams)*	6.50	35
11.	Jack-Bot *(Williams)*	6.42	94
12.	The Flintstones *(Williams)*	6.38	335
13.	Twilight Zone *(Bally)*	6.38	1111
14.	Big Hurt *(Premier)*	6.37	75

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Equipment Poll

REDEMPTION

ALLEY BOWLERS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Skee-Ball Lightning *(Skee-Ball)*	8.00	267
2. Striker *(Design Plus)*	7.75	209
3. Skee-Ball *(Skee-Ball)*	7.18	179
4. Smartball *(Smart)*	6.29	46

SPORTS GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Around the World *(UETD)*	8.00	132
2. Putting Challenge II *(G.L. Tech.)*	8.00	51
3. Hoop It Up *(Atari)*	7.63	280
4. Super Shot *(Skee-Ball)*	7.50	136
5. Shoot to Win *(Smart)*	7.37	184
6. Rage in the Cage *(Fun Merchants)*	7.33	52
7. Arm Champs *(Jaleco)*	7.25	74
8. Full Court Fever *(ICE)*	6.50	152
9. UB-QB Football *(Skee-Ball)*	6.25	72
10. Full Court Frenzy *(ICE)*	6.24	68
11. Two Minute Drill *(Taito)*	5.75	52
12. Slugfest *(Williams)*	5.63	3

SINGLE COIN PUSHERS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Jungle Jive *(Coastal)*	7.80	318
2. Rock 'N Roll/Dino Valley *(Fun Merch.)*	7.67	560
3. Klondike/Gold Coast *(Fun Merchants)*	6.50	225

SINGLE CRANES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Classic Watch Crane *(Smart)*	8.75	166
2. Clean Sweep *(Smart)*	7.28	214
3. Candy Crane *(Smart)*	6.63	162
4. Big Choice *(Fun Merchants)*	6.58	137
5. Action Claw *(Fun Merchants)*	6.50	73
6. Oakmont *(Mission Crane)*	6.33	13
7. Skill Crane *(Grayhound)*	6.14	143
8. Jumbo Crane *(Grayhound)*	5.71	174
9. Hollywood Crane *(Maxwell)*	5.50	13
10. Candy Shop *(Grayhound)*	4.00	136

CHILD-SIZE GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Shoot To Win! Jr. *(Smart)*	7.00	199
2. Hightops *(Skee-Ball)*	6.75	41
3. Super Mario Mushroom *(Premier)*	6.33	38
4. Li'l Dump the Ump *(Doyle)*	6.20	75
5. Bozo Basketball *(Design Plus)*	6.00	22
6. Skee-Toss B.C. *(Skee-Ball)*	5.91	*
7. Smart Toss Em *(Smart)*	5.67	149
8. Toss Em *(UETD)*	5.50	23

ROLL DOWNS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Spin To Win *(Acclaim)*	7.56	194
2. Clown Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	6.73	86
3. Rock N Roll *(Bay Tek)*	5.00	15
4. Tic-Tac-Toe *(Skee-Ball)*	5.00	*
5. Quackers *(Seidel)*	4.33	15

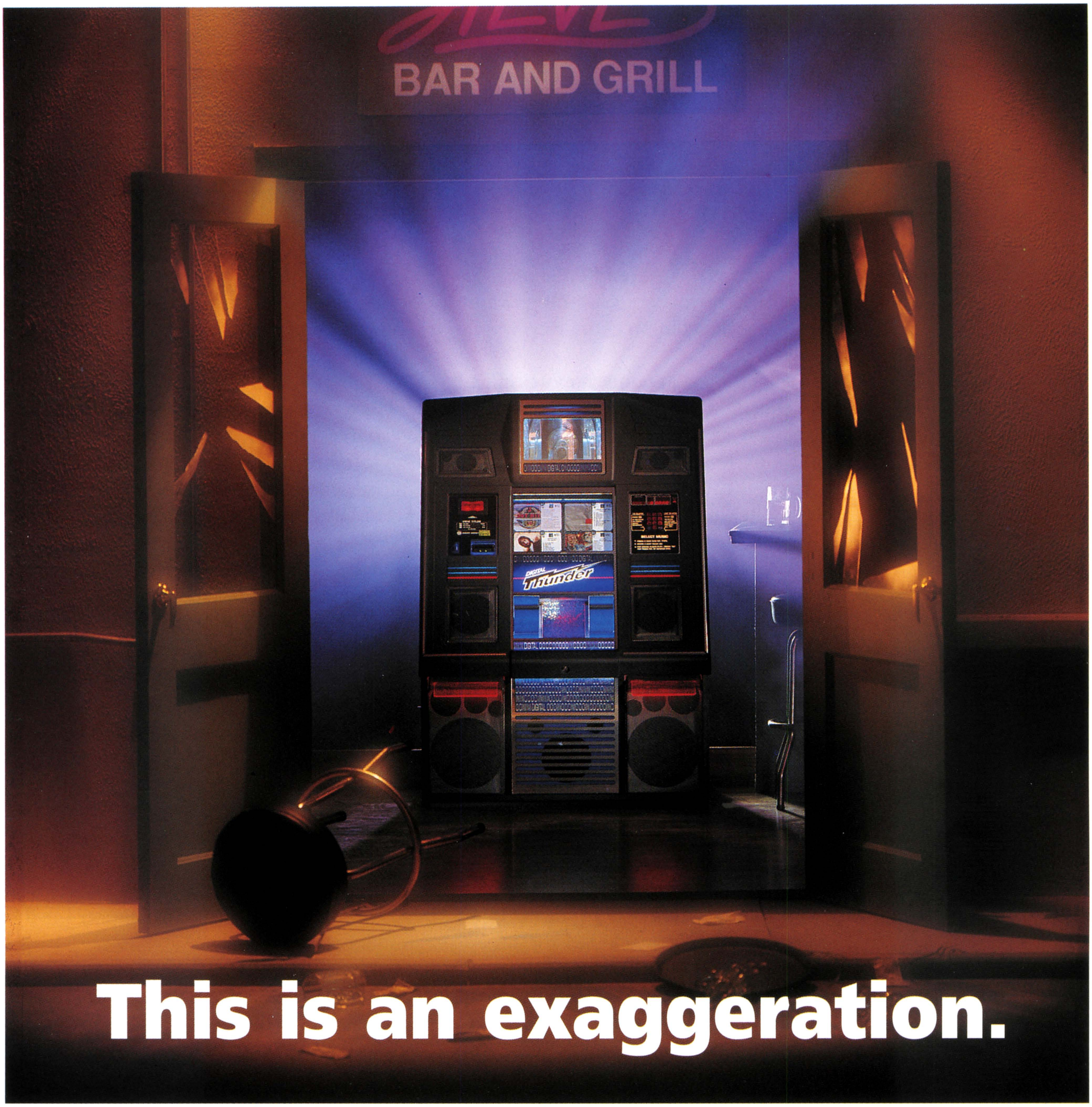
COIN DROP GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Smokin' Token *(Seidel)*	9.00	264
2. Super Bank It II *(Acclaim)*	8.67	57
3. Wheel 'M In *(Bromley)*	8.33	291
4. Aftershock *(Acclaim)*	8.17	211
5. The Mask *(Data East)*	8.00	200
6. Home Run Hitter *(CCI)*	7.83	221
7. Rock-N-Bowl *(Bromley)*	7.50	147
8. Super Bank It *(Acclaim)*	6.75	30
9. Coin Circus *(Am. Sammy)*	6.00	74

NOVELTY

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Cyclone *(ICE)*	9.14	352
2. Colorama *(Bromley)*	8.67	236
3. Wheelin-N-Dealin *(Acclaim)*	8.33	59
4. Dinoscore *(Planet Earth)*	8.31	309
5. Circus Hi-Rise *(Skee-Ball)*	8.00	100
6. Spider Stompin *(Jaleco)*	7.67	194
7. Robo-Bop *(Coastal)*	7.33	127
8. Ribbit Racin *(Acclaim)*	7.27	244
9. Flip N Win *(Planet Earth)*	7.20	138
10. Swamp Stomp *(Acclaim)*	7.00	220
11. Wacky Gator *(Data East)*	7.00	73
12. Pop-A-Tac-Toe *(Coastal)*	6.75	46
13. Pop-A-Slot *(Coastal)*	6.67	94
14. Feed Big Bertha *(Smart)*	6.59	109
15. Pop-A-Ball *(Coastal)*	6.53	42
16. Simple Simon *(Am. Sammy)*	6.50	34
17. Big Mouth *(Meltec)*	6.25	30
18. Buddy Bear *(Smart)*	6.25	109
19. Knock-Down *(Meltec)*	6.25	11
20. Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe *(Data East)*	6.20	15
21. Dump the Ump *(Doyle)*	6.17	27
22. Cracky Crab *(Namco)*	6.00	22
23. Hungry Hungry Hippos *(ICE)*	6.00	11
24. Whac-A-Mole *(Bob's Space)*	6.00	1
25. Magic Mr. X *(Am. Sammy)*	5.67	25
26. Cosmo Gang *(Data East)*	5.11	*
27. Killer T-Rex *(Smart)*	4.25	115
28. Sidewinder *(Bob's Space)*	3.75	*

Results are based on monthly Equipment Poll ballot returns. Point Value=average of ballot ratings on a scale of 1-10; Longevity Points=standings on Best 60 combined game lists (#1 game receives 60 points, #2 game receives 59 points, etc.) *Indicates new or reappearing games.*



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Is this a private game, or can anybody play?

When business is down we often hear industry members jokingly question their sanity for entering the coin machine world in the first place.

When a project at home is more difficult than expected, such as the recent overhaul of my front garden, I am known to complain to my family, "Whose idea was this anyway?" (It was mine, of course, and I'm proud of the finished product).

Whatever our woes and triumphs there are always individuals who want to enter the fold but have no idea where to start. This e-mail inquiry is typical of requests we receive: "Is there someone at Play Meter who can help me? I'm looking for information or a contact person/company who can help with a start-up company. How does someone get into the arcade business?"

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

While there is no official guide for the newcomer, here are a few major points to think about:

1. Whether you want to open a small game room or a large family entertainment center you must first determine if such a facility is feasible in your area. Is there anything like what you envision nearby? Consider existing competition.

2. Have you selected possible locations and done a study to see what the population mix is within a five-, 10-, or 20-mile radius? Is there enough traffic going by your proposed location? Enough lighting and parking?

3. Define who you are. Decide what type of location you want to open: one for teenagers, one for only small children and their parents, or one appealing to everyone? This will determine the types of games you will place in the location.

4. Will you own your own games or contract with a local coin machine operator to supply the games on a shared revenue basis?

5. Do your homework! Plan carefully. Line up your financing for the project.

6. Attend trade shows to see equipment, go to educational seminars, and talk with other people in the business.

7. Don't think the business looks easy because you see a collector taking a bag of quarters from a machine in a location. Machines are expensive and require upkeep and technicians for repairs and adjustments. They must be rotated around once they become stale in a location. The playing public has an insatiable appetite for new game experiences and you will have to keep up with it.

8. Join your state association of operators to find out about proposed laws that can affect your business, and to have an opportunity to network with fellow members of the industry who share common goals.

9. Join the national association for the same reasons.

10. Read several trade magazines to stay abreast of industry happenings and trends. You can never have enough information.

11. Visit your local distributor often to check out new equipment.

12. Once your location is open realize that you are not finished. Your work has just begun. You will have to be sure employees are cordial and helpful to customers, that games are always clean and in good working order, that you set and maintain certain rules in your location regarding unacceptable behavior, that you move games around and brighten up the place from time to time to make it look fresh to repeat customers.

These are just a few thoughts that come to mind. There is so much more to this business that cannot be put into short answers. A great deal is preparation, learning as you go, and learning from the experiences of others. There is no substitute for hard work and dedication. ▲

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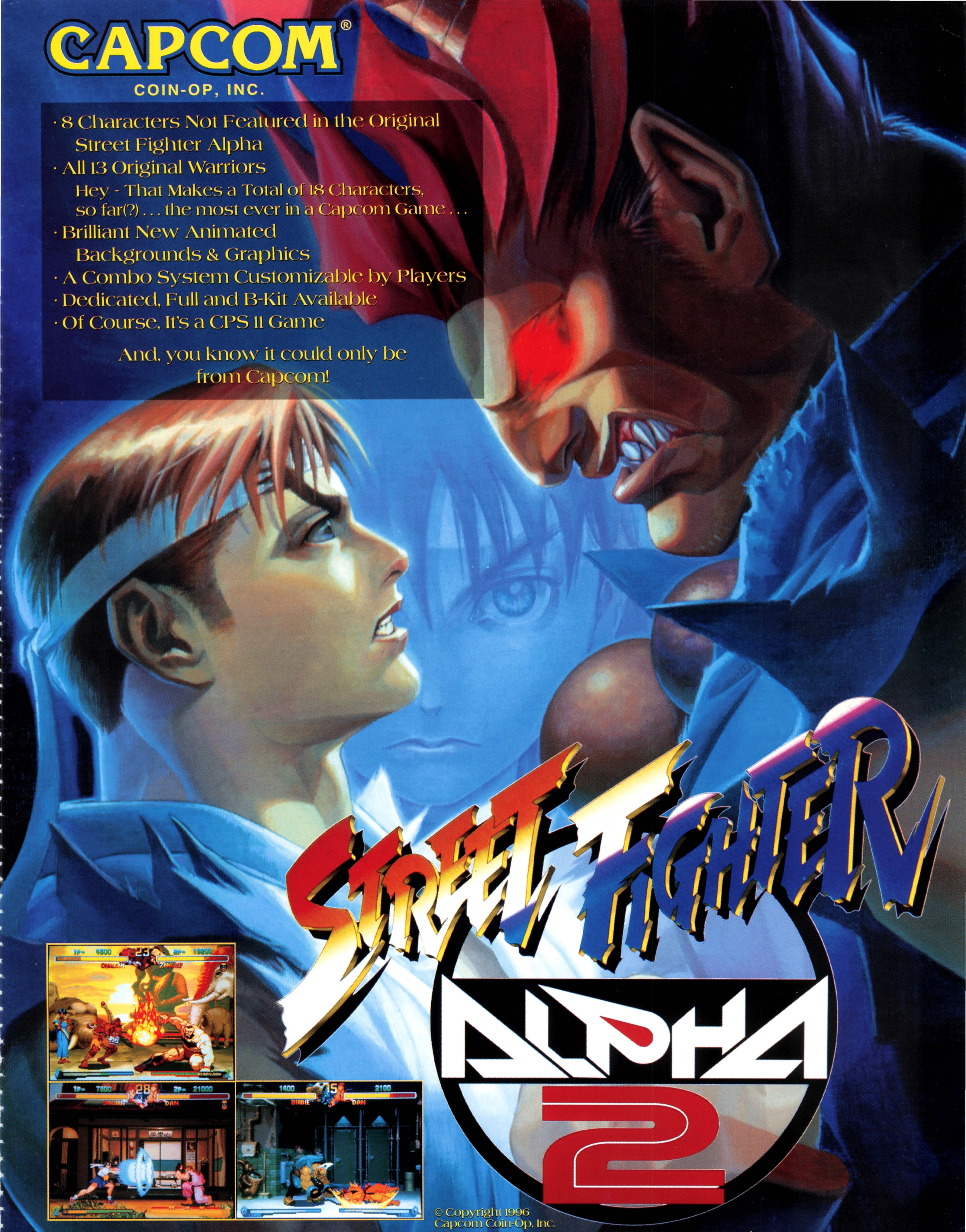
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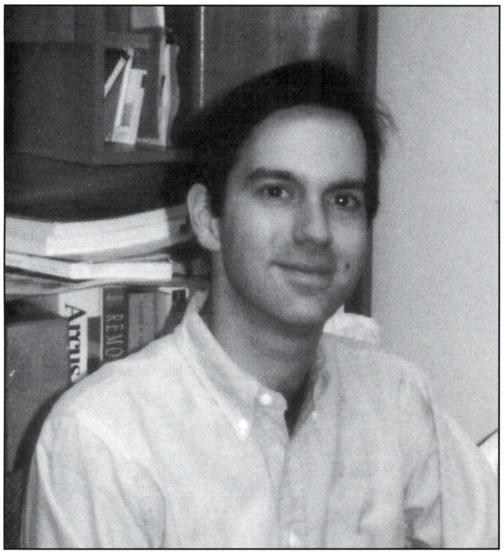
Something old, something new

Culture is a funny thing. Determining what consumers—particularly the young who are more prone to spend their hard-earned or not so hard-earned money on entertainment—desire is the main project of our industry. Yet no amount of cold, rational analysis of the market will ensure success.

What seems certain, though, is that popular culture travels in a circle as opposed to a straight line. One of the trends for family fun centers we examine in this issue is go-karts. They have seen steady growth for the last several years. More than a decade and a half ago, when I was a young kid, my mother endured countless Saturday afternoons of me petitioning to visit the go-kart track at the local fun center. Funny, isn't it?



Steve White
Associate Editor

Another issue we explore in this issue is the growing assimilation of laser tag operations into the family entertainment center market and vice versa. While laser tag is steeped in the vocabulary of high-tech, it still has more in common with those summer games of cowboys and Indians than it does with military defense systems or super computers.

Just last month, I had a chance to reflect on this cultural cycle when I attended the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, which is the world's premier music event and my favorite to-do each year. I like to go on the first Friday, enjoying the privileges of being a local before the huge throng of visitors arrives.

But my plan was foiled this year by the arrival of a traveling horde of music fans known as Phishheads. Yes, that's right, Phishheads. The group, basically leftover followers of the now defunct Grateful Dead band, have adopted the new cult group Phish as their focus of worship.

Phishheads can be briefly described as retro hippies, unkempt in appearance, sporting long hair, wearing tie-dye shirts and old blue jeans, and emanating a unique, if not exactly au natural, fragrance. In essence, they look like 20-somethings mimicking their parents' rebellion in the late 1960s with a few striking additions: tattoos galore and pierced body parts.

So where am I going with this besides venting my frustration at this rude intrusion into my own cultural habitat? Well, for one I was struck by my fellow Generation Xers' need to adopt the style of the Baby Boom. Where is the creativity, I asked myself. Couldn't they come up with their own way to be annoying? That's the best part about being young, isn't it?

But setting my own tastes aside, I realize there are some universals in matters of culture and entertainment. Even in our own industry, the stalwart earners are the likes of pool tables and jukeboxes. While there may have been some changes in delivery, the essence of these attractions remains intact.

My favorite writer William Faulkner once wrote that the past isn't gone, it isn't even past. Not unlike the attraction of 1960s culture for subsequent generations, Faulkner was a boy in the early 1900s who fought the Civil War many times over with his young buddies generations after the matter had been settled.

While far from moving to Montana and becoming a mail bomber, the onslaught of technology gives me reason for pause from time to time. When I read industry literature and publications, the drive to be the biggest and the fastest often overshadows the need to be the best. They are not always synonymous; technology makes things easier, not necessarily better.

What lesson can members of the coin-op industry—from manufacturers to operators—draw from my Jazz Festival experience? For one, there might be some money in an amusement experience aimed at this second wave of hippies. But more importantly, it is important to seek out those universal forms of entertainment. The attraction of something new garners only one sale, while the appeal of universal fun keeps the customer coming back.

Peace, man.... ▲

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Play-By-Play buys Ace Novelty for $44 million

In a move aimed at strengthening its market position, San Antonio-based Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties has entered into an agreement to acquire certain assets and assume certain liabilities of Ace Novelty Co. of Bellevue, Wash.

The supplier of stuffed toys featuring licensed children's entertainment characters and corporate trademarks will purchase Ace's operating assets, and business operations and facilities, including four warehouses and distribution centers located in Bellevue, Wash.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Chicago, Ill.; and Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada, for approximately $44 million in cash, debt, and the assumption of certain liabilities. The acquisition was scheduled to be completed during May.

"This is a significant acquisition for Play-By-Play which fits nicely into our plan for aggressive growth and increasing shareholder value," said Arturo G. Torres, chairman and CEO of Play-By-Play. "There are major similarities and synergies in these two businesses, which, when combined, will form a strong, full-service supplier to the amusement and retail toy industries. Our customers will benefit from the combined amusement resources and extensive portfolio of trademark and character licenses."

Play-By-Play says the move will strengthen its position by adding to current resources in the form of sales and distribution centers, character licenses, and additional customer base. Ace holds several domestic entertainment licenses including Warner Bros.' Looney Tunes license for the amusement market, Warner Bros.' "Space Jam" animated/live action motion picture starring Michael Jordan and the Looney Tunes characters, and the Warner Bros.' Looney Tunes license for the retail market.

"Ace's leading position in the amusement industry combined with Play-By-Play's dynamic management style will have a positive effect on Play-By-Play's strategic growth plans," said Mark A. Gawlik, president and chief operating officer of Play-By-Play. "In particular, Ace's strength in the outdoor amusement park and carnival business combines nicely with our strength in the indoor family entertainment amusement business. In addition, we expect to realize substantial operating efficiencies in purchasing and distribution once the acquisition is fully integrated."

Ace president Ronald S. Mayers will serve as president of Play-By-Play's newly created Ace subsidiary. Ace, a leading supplier to the amusement industry, had net sales of approximately $66 million in calendar 1995. Play-By-lay had net sales of approximately $50 million in its fiscal year ending July 31, 1995. Ace acquired the operations of Acme Premium Supply Corp. in 1994.

Although the two companies had entered into a definitive asset purchase agreement, consummation of the proposed transaction was subject to a number of conditions, including, without limitation, Play-By-Play's acquisition financing and obtaining licensor agreements.

Cineplex Odeon forges pact with Sega GameWorks

Cinescape, a new division of Toronto-based Cineplex Odeon Corp., has entered into a strategic relationship with Sega GameWorks for the development and operation of location-based interactive game centers in the United States. GameWorks will also be the supplier of game equipment to Cinescape.

Cinescape is responsible for developing and operating interactive entertainment centers in Canada and the United States within and adjacent to Cineplex Odeon motion picture theater complexes. The centers will offer high-tech play experiences such as state-of-the-art video games, virtual reality technology, and motion-based simulators. Cineplex Odeon estimates an investment of $10 million in the Cinescape division over the next three years.

Sega GameWorks is a joint venture between Sega Enterprises, DreamWorks SKG, and MCA Inc. to develop state-of-the-art location-based entertainment centers worldwide. The two groups have agreed to work cooperatively with a view to maximizing the benefits of both parties in the markets that Cineplex has, or is developing, a presence as a motion picture exhibitor.

"As a theater exhibitor we believe we are uniquely capable of exploiting these opportunities," said Allen Sharp, president and CEO of Cineplex. "The combination of Sega GameWorks' principals' resources, expertise, and vision should make Sega GameWorks the leader in supplying the most up-to-date and popular games and bring the experience to new levels of appeal. Cineplex Odeon is excited by the possibilities and opportunities created by this relationship."

"We view this agreement with Cineplex Odeon as an opportunity to forge a long-term and vital link with one of the world's leading motion picture theater chains, particularly given its significant presence and planned expansion in key urban markets," commented GameWorks' CEO Skip Paul.

Cineplex owns and operates motion picture cinemas and related food service concessions in six Canadian provinces, 13 U.S. states and the District of Columbia. The company controls 1,501 screens in 320 locations total.

U.S. Senate proclaims roller coaster week

The United States Senate has proclaimed June 16-22 as National Roller Coaster Week in observance of the International Year of the Roller Coaster.

Senate Resolution 235, sponsored by Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.), passed on March 27. According to the resolution, the world's oldest existing roller coaster, Leap-The-Dips, is located at Lakemont Park in Altoona, Pa., and is currently being restored.

The resolution also noted that there are currently 500 roller coasters in operation worldwide and advances in technology and a renewed interest in leisure have meant a resurgence with more than 50 new roller coaster projects underway this year.

Your Ticket To a Modern Entertainment Center

Clean Sweep

New 1996 Models

Versions:
CS 60" Jumbo Single
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CS 60" Jumbo Twin Price
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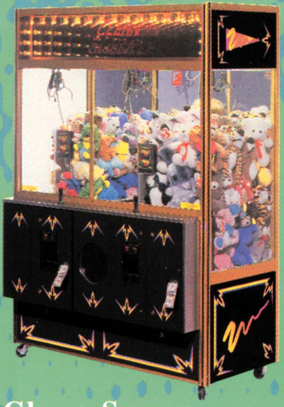

Clean Sweep

Versions:
Single, Super Single, Double, Triple, Double 1/2 & 1/2, 34" Jumbo Jr. & 42" Jumbo
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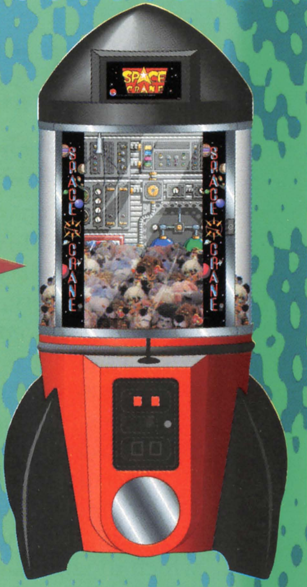
"Play Till You Win... Winner Every Time" Candy Crane or Plush Crane


SPACE CRANE
SPACE CRANE
SPACE CRANE

Space Crane
Patent Pending

New 1996 Models

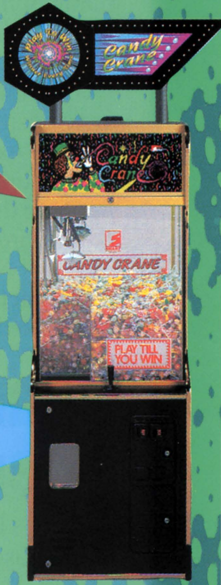
Versions:
CS 42" Jumbo
CS 34" Jumbo
CS 26" Jumbo

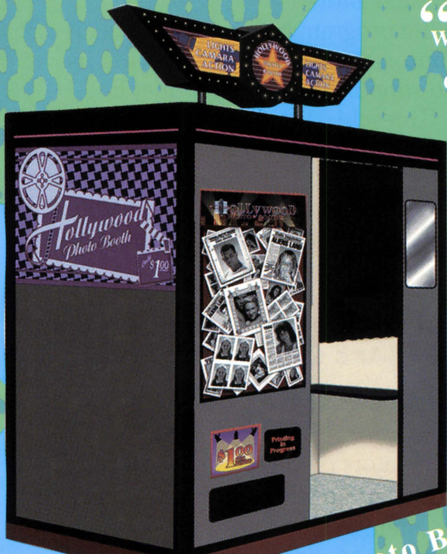
Win Win
Clean Sweep

Classic

Versions:
Single and Double
UL LISTED

"Play Till You Win... Winner Every Time" Candy Crane
UL LISTED


Candy Crane
CANDY CRANE
PLAY TILL YOU WIN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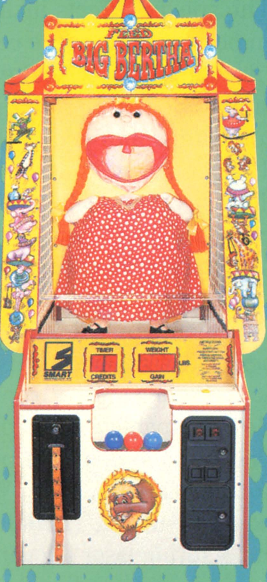
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NSM introduces new marketing tools

As part of an ongoing effort to assist its North American operators, NSM-America recently introduced a series of informational tools for operators of its CD jukeboxes.

These materials, which come in the form of pamphlets and booklets, were recently introduced to NSM's distributor network and are now available to operators. "The overall goal of making such tools available is to help the operator increase his profits within their locations," said NSM senior vice president John Margold.

"This can be achieved in many, less obvious ways, from improving the arrangement of equipment within the location to making the location better aware of the other services which the operator provides," Margold continued. "While many of these ideas are based on common sense, it may be enlightening to the operator who is too up to his neck in his work to realize the effect of such efforts."

Distributor response to the program has reportedly been very positive. "As a distributor, these materials provide us with an excellent means to support the NSM product line," said Viking Vending's Jim Groeschl. "It helps our operators improve their businesses and become stronger. Overall it creates a win/win situation."

All of NSM's sales and marketing materials are available by contacting NSM-America at (708) 860-5100 or any of its authorized distributors.

Heads Up offers special effects for LaserTrek

Heads Up Technologies, creators of the real-time laser tag game LaserTrek, has introduced amusement park quality special effects for its game systems.

The special effects include a Mega Target, a five-sided alien pod hung from the ceiling which opens up with spectacular audio and visual effects when shot by the player; Lightning Bolt, a 25-foot by 6-foot lightning bolt consisting of computer-controlled strobes and digital audio sequencers; and Laser Portal, a 10-foot archway with computer-controlled chase lights, illuminated alien writing, and a light pipe force field.

"Adding special effects to our existing laser tag product line creates a theme park quality attraction at a reasonable price," said company president Robert Harshaw. "We provide customers with a complete laser tag package including a fully-animated briefing system, sophisticated player equipment, arena design capabilities, and promotional material."

LaserTrek systems are being operated in such diverse locations as Omaha, Neb.; Wakayama, Japan; Albany, New York; and Pattaya, Thailand, to name a few. In addition to manufacturing laser tag games, Heads Up designs, manufactures, and markets digital voice and display systems for the aviation, mass transit, and entertainment industries. For more information, call (214) 407-1131.

Edward Elum passes away

Industry pioneer and founding member and director of the Ohio Coin Machine Association, Edward P. Elum of Elum Music in Massillon, Ohio, passed away in late April. He had been in poor health for some time.

Along with his role as a supporter of the coin-op industry, Elum was also very active in the business, civic, church, and political arenas in his local community.

Elum's father Thomas founded the business in 1910, and the company celebrated its 85th anniversary last year. As one of the largest independently owned vending companies in Ohio, Elum operates an amusement and vending route that stretches across seven counties in the northeastern part of the state. The company is also involved in the retail and wholesale business as well.

Elum is survived by his sons Edward, Phillip, and George; daughter Jan; one son-in-law and two daughters-in-law; as well as grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. His wife Jeanette passed away in 1987.

Edward Elum (second from left), who recently passed away, is seen here with, (l-r): Thomas Elum, George Elum, Edward Elum, and Phillip Elum.

Iwerks TurboRide Theatre coming to Dave & Buster's

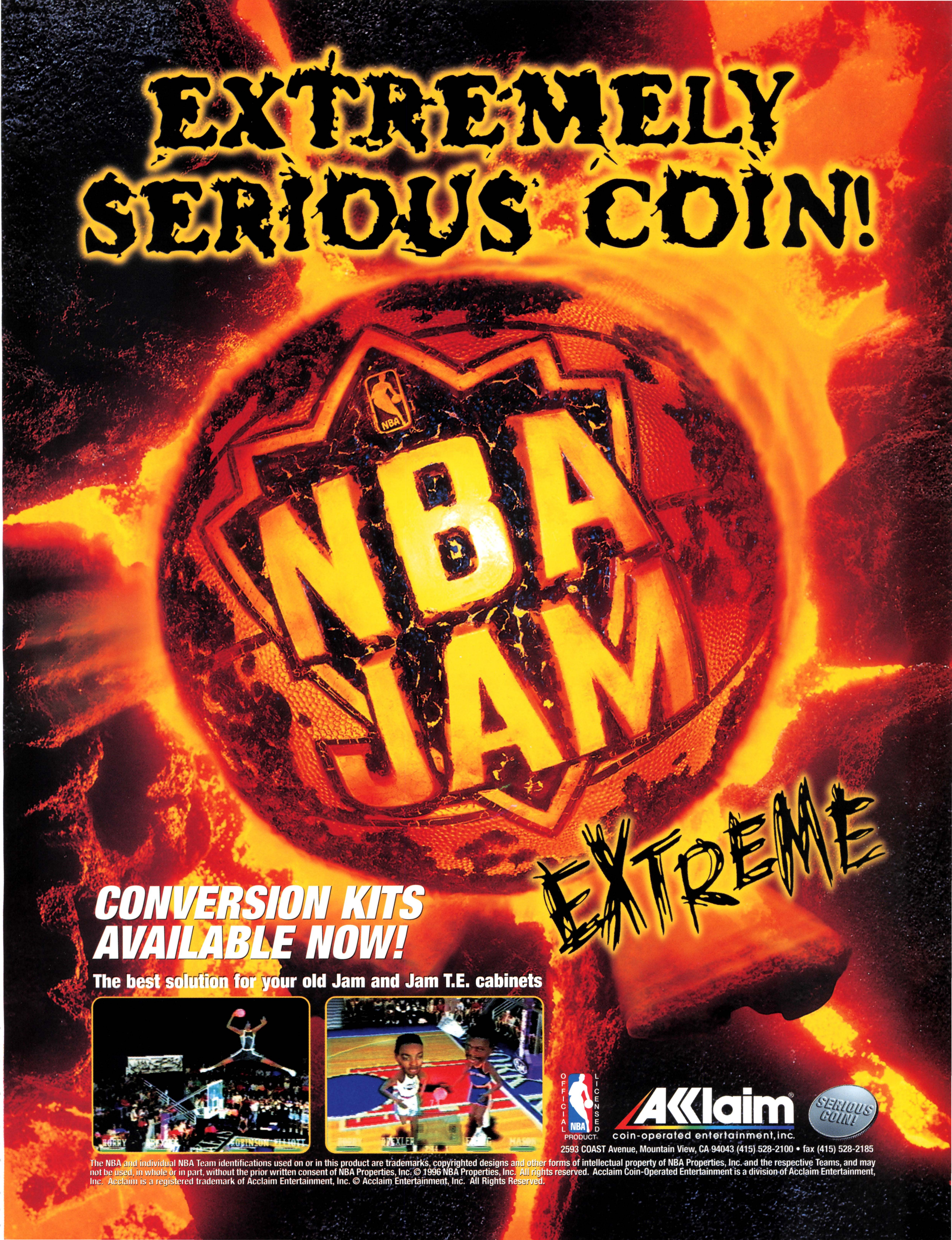
Dave & Buster's Inc., one of the country's leading operators of upscale restaurant and entertainment centers, will soon include Iwerk's TurboRide Theatres at several of its locations.

The first will open at the Philadelphia Dave & Buster's location later this summer. The second will debut with the grand opening this fall of the newest location in the White Flint Mall in N. Bethesda, Md.

"We are absolutely thrilled to be associated with a great company like Iwerks," said Dave Corriveau, co-founder of the company. "This kind of joint venture arrangement enables Dave & Buster's the opportunity to offer our guests the latest and greatest in high-tech interactive entertainment experiences while at the same time limiting our capital outlay."

Turbo Ride Theatres feature theater-style motion simulator seats that gyrate in sync with the action on the large screen. Iwerks will feature a changing array of full-action movie shorts with titles like "Days of Thunder: The Ride," "Dino Island," "RoboCop: The Ride," and "Aliens: Ride at the Speed of Fright."

Dave & Buster's, founded in 1982, currently operates eight complexes, including two locations in Dallas, two locations in Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Hollywood, Fla. The company plans to add a location in the Washington D.C. area this fall and in Rockland County, New York, in the spring of 1997. Two additional locations to be opened next year will be announced at a later date.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StrayLight VR tour to promote Jim Beam Brands

Looking for an innovative way to promote one of its most popular products, After Shock Liqueur, Jim Beam Brands has chosen StrayLight Corp. to develop an interactive virtual reality adventure.

StrayLight custom designed the *Pyramid of the Ancient Astronauts* game for the event, which will see eight traveling VR systems visiting 45 cities and headlining more than 4,000 events over a nine-month period.

Players will get a chance to traverse smoldering lava rivers, extinguish flaming boulders, unfold a pyramid maze, defeat guarding sentries, and gather special organic crystals in search of ancient astronauts trapped in suspended animation.

The tour, being managed by GMR Marketing of Milwaukee, Wis., got underway this spring. The software is played using StrayLight's 3D-XTC system, a portable stand-up platform where players navigate through virtual environments with a head mounted display and a multifunctional hand controller.

The premise of the game is based on After Shock's dual taste sensation. After Shock, imported from Canada, is a unique cinnamon cordial which tastes like a hot cinnamon fireball at first. This is followed quickly by a cool soothing sensation. In addition, mysterious crystals form and grow inside the bottle and can be consumed for the ultimate After Shock experience.

AFTER SHOCK

Jim Beam Brands has chosen StrayLight to design a virtual reality experience for its nine-month After Shock tour promoting the cinnamon cordial.

"StrayLight worked closely with Jim Beam and GMR Marketing in the development of an integrated marketing program," said StrayLight's director of marketing Victoria Massulli. "The focus of the promotion had to be an on-premise event that was interactive, cutting edge, and could demonstrate the hot vs. cold sensation of the drink."

StrayLight's system was designed for special event promotions and is capable of traveling to two events each night. Thus, the tour, which will visit local bars, was able to double the number of events without increasing the time duration.

"We could never have produced the After Shock Tour without small portable equipment," said GMR's Jeff Snyder. "Our tour managers set up the virtual reality systems in under five minutes."

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25% Less than any other redemption game
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Start leaving a mess every place you go.

There's absolutely no better way to make locations happy.

The bigger the mess, the busier the night ... and the fatter the location's till.
And our Association can help you do just that. Even more importantly, it can help make your pool table cash boxes fatter. Much fatter.

The VNEA is literally everything you need — and everything you need to know — to dramatically increase your pool table income.
We're an association of coin-equipment operators that have gradually refined our league support system over the years, then "packaged it," so to speak. And this package — everything from how-to booklets to patches & pins to big $$$ purse tournaments — is available to all new operator members. Our purpose is simple: To maximize our pool table earnings and our location allegiance.

Our leagues increase our cash box earnings. And the people our leagues bring in increase our location's food and beverage sales.
Everybody wins. Further, both of our earnings increases "stick" — they're continuous. Further still, they keep on growing ... league season after league season. Everybody wins even more.

If you think that VNEA leagues are a lot of work, you *were* right.
But not anymore. Yes, there's still work involved ... you can't just push a button and everything runs flawlessly. But, when you know everything you need to do and have most everything you need to do it with on hand — and, on top of that, have the support of the Association standing behind you — you'd be amazed at how simple it can be.

Write, call or FAX us for full information.
Or simply contact your nearest Valley pool table distributor. Then give us a chance ... try VNEA leagues in a select group of your locations for a season. And just see what happens.

Just see if we don't help mess up your locations, too.

VNEA
VALLEY NATIONAL 8-BALL LEAGUE ASSOCIATION

Valley National Eight Ball Association
333 Morton St., P.O. Box 656
Bay City, MI 48707
Tel: (517) 893-1800/Fax: (517) 893- 0103
Toll Free: 800-544-1346

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NAMA publishes new certified listing

For almost 40 years the vending industry has had a voluntary machine evaluation program to enable equipment manufacturers to build machines in conformity with federal Public Health Service sanitary requirements.

The 1996-97 edition of the Listing of Certified Food and Beverage Vending Machines published by the National Automatic Merchandising Association includes a full listing of each manufacturer's certified models and the dates they first were certified to meet the requirements of the standard.

The listing book is published every other year with supplements issued for new models periodically. From only a dozen or so manufacturers and their machines listed in the first evaluation book, the program has grown today to include more than 50 companies with hundreds of different models of vending machines listed.

This program allows operators, customers, public health and military officials, and other user groups to identify those machines that meet a voluntary standard. Called the NAMA Standard for the Sanitary Design and Construction of Food and Beverage Vending Machines, it was developed by and is kept current with the active participation of the association's Automatic Merchandising Health-Industry Council (AMHIC), comprised of regulatory officials, vending operators, machine manufacturers, and industry representatives.

Manufacturers who voluntarily participate in the program have their models tested initially and then annually by independent evaluators contracted by NAMA and AMHIC. After passing the evaluation, manufacturers are issued letters of compliance for specific models involved and are allowed to display the NAMA Service Mark on or near the machine identification plates.

AMHIC meets at least twice yearly to review the program, monitor its various aspects, and evaluate the standards. In late 1995, AMHIC established a new category for machines dispensing frozen food and set standards for their temperature-holding ability. Additionally, performance requirements for refrigerated food machines were increased.

For more information about the program, contact Larry Eils, director of health, safety, and technical standards for NAMA, at (312) 346-0370.

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Great Solitaire
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Phraze Craze

Tournament Megatouch

Rainbow Amusements closes; Metz retires

Kiddie ride developer, importer, and distributor Rainbow Amusements of Westport, Conn., has closed up shop with the recent retirement of company founder Shelly Metz.

Metz reports that Amtec Technologies of Ocean, N.J., has purchased his entire inventory of parts. Amtec, which will also assume service responsibilities for Rainbow rides, can be reached at (800) 882-8002 or (908) 918-0300; fax (908) 918-0501.

Rainbow developed a series of 16 interchangeable rides with belt-driven movement and fiberglass bodies. Choices in the series included an airplane, speed boat, pony, kangaroo, pelican, donkey, dolphin, and fantasy horses.

NDA to use new formats in fall

The National Dart Association will begin using Points per Dart and Marks per Round as the official classification and ranking format beginning in the fall of this year.

All members will be required to adopt the new format in order to be eligible for classified tournament entry at all association events beginning with Team Dart XII in 1997.

The association will prepare and distribute a classification and ranking instruction manual. For more information, contact Mike Smythe at (800) 808-9884; fax (317) 387-0999; e-mail (msmythe@in.net).

New York licensing provision struck down

A federal judge in New York state has declared unconstitutional a 72-hour investigation notice provision of the state's fairness in music licensing law, AMOA government relations News Flash reported.

The law required the 72-hour notice to a proprietor prior to an initial investigation, but Judge Barbara Jones reportedly said compliance would be close to impossible, thereby threatening enforcement and copyright protection.

New York, which was one of seven states to pass licensing laws last year, also required the performing rights societies to provide a list of their repertoire, disclose rates paid by other businesses, and identify investigators, as well as allow for damages.

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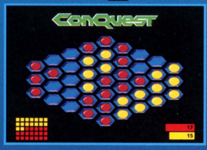

A strategic battle to conquer the most territory. The right move can turn the tables!

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Merit Industries is offering financing terms of **NO MONEY DOWN, NO PAYMENT FOR 120 DAYS!** The first of 15 equal monthly payments isn't due until the 4th month. This means you have 18 months to pay for your investment! Just purchase a minimum of 10 MEGATOUCH video games or 10 SCORPION dart boards and you'll be eligible to take advantage of this incredible factory-assisted financing. Call today your nearest participating authorized distributor!

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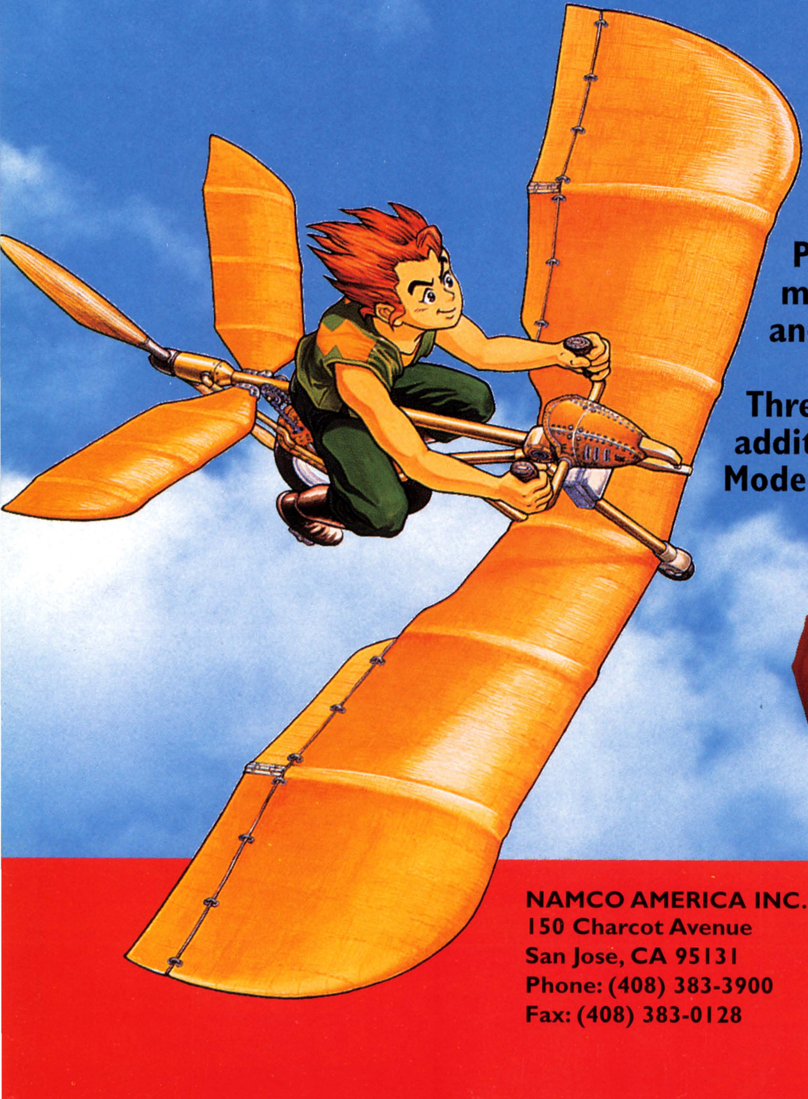
Intuitive game play - Pop as many "hot-air" balloons in the time provided.



Pilots select from two modes: Novice (Point Attack) and Advanced (Story).

Three stages in the Novice Mode with an additional "Bonus" stage in the Advanced Mode!

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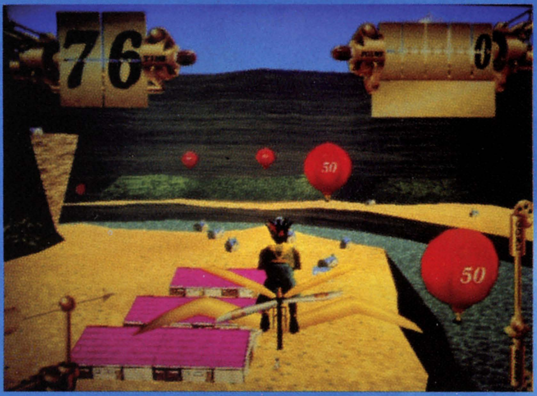
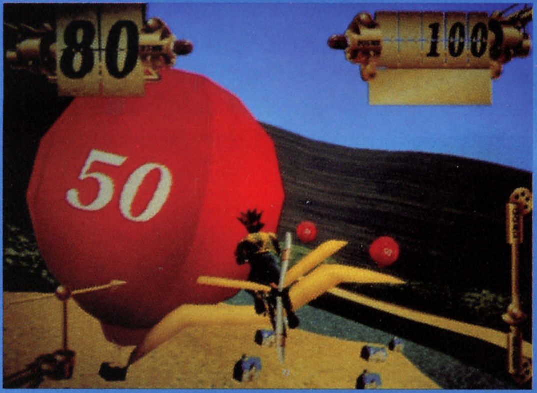
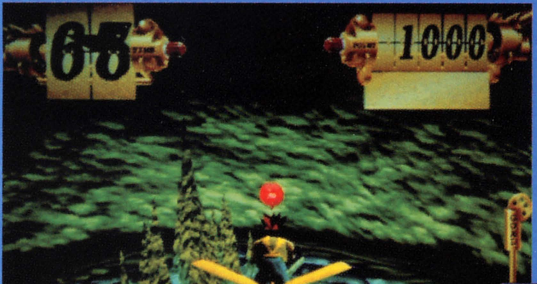


Amateur pilots can glide through the Novice course with little chance of becoming lost.

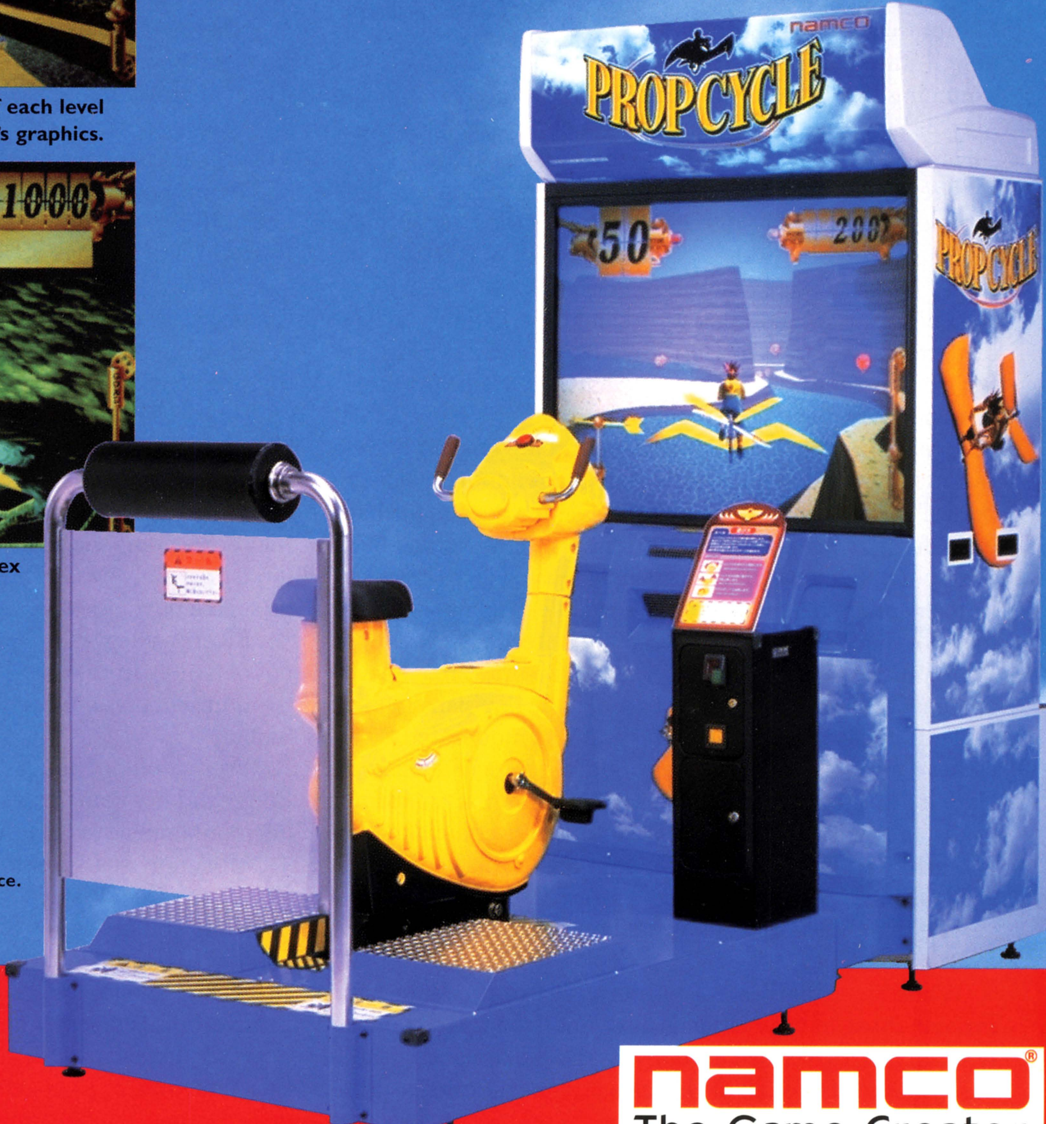


The unique design and course layout of each level demonstrates the versatility of Namco's graphics.



The advanced courses are more complex and require pilots to maneuver their aircraft with accuracy and at times speed.

PROP CYCLE is the ultimate flying experience. The bike mechanism offers both rolling and pitching to amplify the overall flying experience. Pilots use pedal power to fly through an aerial obstacle course, bursting balloons to gain points and time. The effects of the wind, gravity, and the weather on the flying bike, combined with the unparalleled 3-D graphics create realism of a virtual reality nature. Players will flock to this game! ***IT'S INCREDIBLE!***



Specifications:
Dimensions: 93" x 50" x 106 1/2"
Weight: 1,300 lbs.
Power Consumption: 750 Watts

•All dimensions are in HxWxD format.
Specifications subject to change without notice.

Import Model Shown.

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Riverboat gaming show draws a light crowd

Attendees crowd around James E. Smith Jr. (c) at the "Focus on Louisiana" session.

"The economic impact of floating casinos is undeniable," stated literature announcing the 1996 Riverboat Gaming Congress & Expo May 2-3 in New Orleans. In the light of this truism it was a surprise to see lower attendance than in years past.

The traditional fall show chose a spring venue this time around, and both days the exhibit floor closed early. Show dates coincided with the second weekend of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival (referred to locally as Jazzfest).

"I don't know what they were thinking when they scheduled this show during Jazzfest," said one seminar panelist, referring to the mixed blessing of such a high-profile event.

In addition, there is the controversy over the future of not only riverboats but also video poker and the one land-based casino in Louisiana. A cafeteria-style referendum in November will in effect allow parishes a local option vote on the back end, after gaming is in place. Current contracts would be fulfilled but not renewed for any gaming venue voted down.

Sixteen seminars were on the schedule, dealing with such topics as marketing, table games, new slot technology, interior environments, emergency preparedness, security, retail developments, Indiana riverboat start-up, and the Louisiana market.

The "Focus on Louisiana" session was moderated by attorney Paul West of McGlinchey Stafford Lang. Panelists included attorney James E. Smith Jr. of Smith Martin, former Louisiana Riverboat Gaming Commission chairman Ken Pickering, and real estate developer Steve Rittvo of Urban Systems Inc.

The first question was, "What happened to the New Orleans market?"

While riverboats in the western part of the state have thrived, those in New Orleans have not lived up to expectations. In fact, two closed abruptly, as did the temporary land-based casino. The shell of Harrah's permanent casino sits incomplete at the foot of Canal Street, a reminder of grandiose plans gone astray, as bankruptcy proceedings continue and negotiations with the city and state meet with little progress.

Said Rittvo, "It's amazing, an enigma for us in the business, because we built it and they didn't come."

At the core of the problem: underestimating the draw of established New Orleans attractions. In effect, visitors were not prepared to give up the night life for gaming.

"Downtown shopping has not worked and gaming didn't work," added Rittvo.

Other factors included the continued growth of Mississippi's dockside gaming which took away an estimated 25 percent of the Louisiana gaming market, and higher taxes in Louisiana (18-1/2 percent compared to eight percent in Mississippi with no boarding fees).

According to Smith, "It's been an incredible disappointment, a major misunderstanding of inner city gambling. This is a finite market. The people with the funds to gamble don't live in the city and don't come downtown after dark."

Pickering explained, "We had 15 applicants or better wanting to put boats on the Mississippi River downtown. Some didn't get approved. Locals with political clout got their way. We had people approved who had no more idea what to do with a riverboat than the man in the moon–that hurt us."

The original plan was to group boats along the river between the convention center and the French Quarter. Said Rittvo: "When you get a clustering of boats the sum is greater than the individuals. It's something Mississippi did. Gaming patrons like to visit all the gaming choices."

All agreed that the Shreveport market was one of the "most underestimated markets in the country." Both Shreveport and Lake Charles, which have multiple vessels, draw heavily from Texas and are a resounding successes.

Other comments:

"We were so cocky with New Orleans and most of the riverboats going there, we thought Mississippi wouldn't matter. It was all New Orleans-driven. We expected the city to be such a big market."

"Riverboat legislation was an effort to help a state running out of money from oil and gas."

"Louisiana is an example of how not to draft original legislation."

"Predictions of thugs, traffic, and prostitutes in Baton Rouge did not come true. Downtown Baton Rouge is thriving more than it was before riverboats."

"Most new seats in the Legislature were won by people who were elected as opponents of gambling. Take away gambling and you take away $550 million in revenue to the state and put 40,000 people out of work. I've got to think the loss of revenue and jobs will kick in."

Riverboats currently operate in Missouri (7), Iowa (9), Illinois (12), Louisiana (12), and Indiana (1). At press time only the Aztar was in Evansville. Ind., but several vessels were poised to take maiden cruises including the Majestic Star and Trump Casino in Gary and the Empress III in Hammond.

AMOA foundation awards 40 Hesch scholarships

Forty individuals have been awarded Wayne E. Hesch Scholarships in the amount of $1,000 each for the 1996-97 school year. The recipients were named recently by AMOA's Education Foundation.

The 40 new recipients bring to 256 the number of Hesch scholarships awarded to worthy young people since 1985. The scholarship program, administered by the foundation, was established in memory of the Wayne E. Hesch, who served as AMOA president 1978-79.

This year's recipients and their AMOA member sponsors are:

- **CALIFORNIA:** Tina Chan and Sarah Calfee, both sponsored by Atari Games of Milpitas.
- **COLORADO:** Scott Pozner and Jennifer Hackett, both sponsored by Amusement Vending Co. of Englewood.
- **FLORIDA:** Amanda Ford, Federal Vending Inc. of Boca Raton.
- **GEORGIA:** Angela Crews, Valdosta Coin-Op Machines of Valdosta.
- **HAWAII:** Brandon Ching of Hawaiin Isles Vending Ltd. of Honolulu.
- **IOWA:** Mandy Messerly, Amuse-O-Matic of Ft. Dodge, and Kristin Kraayenbrink, Soo Valley Vending of Sioux Center.
- **IDAHO:** Christopher Mahler, Western Music & Vending of Twin Falls.
- **ILLINOIS:** Christina Becherer, Tribout Sales of Belleville, and Megan Laabs, Bentler Amusement Co. of Springfield.
- **LOUISIANA:** Amy Barranco, Fred's Amusements of Prairieville.
- **MASSACHUSETTS:** Jaclyn Publicover, Melo-Tone Vending of Somerville.
- **MICHIGAN:** Nicole Berquist, WP North Amusement of Ironwood.
- **MINNESOTA:** Nathaniel Brown, Lieberman Music of Minneapolis, and Matthew Zasmeta, Hazelwood Corp. of Aitkin.
- **MONTANA:** Marissa Schoemer, Tipton Inc.-Good Old Boys Vending of Helena, and Mike Heggem, Best Vending of Whitefish.
- **NEW JERSEY:** Marjorie Treger, NJPT Inc. of Willingboro.
- **NEW MEXICO:** Toni Balzano, Fonestone-Hoops of Carlsbad.
- **NEW YORK:** Michelle Crusius, Ace Amusements of Brooklyn; Joanne Wood, Robbins Vending Co. of Cortland; and Molly Johnston, Dart Amusements, Buffalo.
- **OHIO:** Samantha Winchell, Summit Music of Barberton, and Amanda Beckham, Red Baron Amusements of Toledo.
- **OREGON:** Nicole Prantl, Family Amusement Center of Salem.
- **PENNSYLVANIA:** Karen Sagady and Beth Beadle, both sponsored by Mars Electronics Intl. of West Chester.
- **SOUTH CAROLINA:** Veronica Barrow and Christopher Render, both sponsored by Rosemary Coin Machines Inc. of Myrtle Beach.
- **SOUTH DAKOTA:** Jenni Eckert, D & E Music & Vending of Mitchell.
- **TENNESSEE:** Melinda Pope, Games of Tennessee of Shelbyville
- **TEXAS:** Candice Hubacek, Houston Fun and Games of Houston, and Amanda Aikman, Able Vending Inc. of El Paso.
- **UTAH:** Chad Anderson, Perfect 360 Controls of Midvale.
- **VIRGINIA:** Diana Duncan, Future Targets of Keswick.
- **WISCONSIN:** Kelly Stowe, Midstate Amusement Games of Oshkosh.
- **WEST VIRGINIA:** Bobbi Timler, Price Music of Barboursville, and Jessica Ball, Derrick Music Co. of Charleston.

Go back to school with IAAPA management program

On Nov. 18, the bell will ring for amusement facility middle managers at IAAPA's first-ever Amusement Facility Management School, a unique learning opportunity for amusement park, water park, and family entertainment center managers.

The school will offer 20 hours of advanced operations and management training and provide continuing education units from Greenville Technical College in Greenville, S.C.

Courses will focus on strategic planning, problem solving, decision making, time management, leadership, marketing, and financial management. Sessions on trends and operations will also be offered for amusement parks, water parks, and FECs specifically.

"The Amusement Facility Management School really rounds out the educational opportunities IAAPA provides for its facility members," said Darrell Metzger, chairman of IAAPA's education committee. "It will compliment the convention workshop program, the on-site training program, and the Institute Program at Cornell University. We now have a level of learning for everyone."

The school will be presented Nov. 18-22 at the New Orleans Convention Center in New Orleans, La., during IAAPA's Annual Convention and Trade Show. To attend, you must be an IAAPA member; the cost is $125 per person. For more information, contact IAAPA at (703) 836-4800; fax (703) 836-4801.

Internet distribution service gets underway

The Rock Island, Ill.,-based firm Targeted Marketing & Sales Associates is debuting this month the Manufacturers' Amusement Clearing House, a marketplace on the World Wide Web for new amusement equipment.

Interested buyers and browsers will be able to visit the clearing house via their computers, entering rooms where manufacturers will have their products displayed along with pertinent product specifications and information.

Online visitors will be able to request printed literature or a price quote in addition to ordering products. Requests will be processed and responses mailed or faxed out within 48 hours.

"The Manufacturers' Amusement Equipment Clearing House will be the first one-stop source for buyers worldwide to compare features, options, and prices of competing manufacturers' products," said Targeted Marketing's John Klopf. "The clearing house will process orders to be fulfilled by manufacturers, and will respond directly to requests for quotes and additional product information."

"We're changing the way amusement equipment will be distributed in the future," said Targeted Marketing partner Jeff Eirinberg. "Factory-direct pricing and shipping will minimize what the customer pays to take delivery of a product."

However, several manufacturers contacted stressed that they did not intend to sell direct, and would only post retail sales prices. At least one said it intended to use the service as a source for leads and would refer potential customers to traditional distributors.

Companies reserving space on the clearing house thus far include manfacturers of cranes, novelty and redemption equipment, go-karts, golf simulators, kiddie rides, sports games, table games, and other amusement related equipment. For more information, contact John Klopf or Jeff Eirinberg at Targeted Marketing & Sales Associates, P.O. Box 6532 Rock Island, IL; (309) 788-4765; fax (309) 788-4705; e-mail (TARGTMARKT@AOL.COM).

IAAPA summer meeting set for September

IAAPA will hold its '96 Summer Meeting at the Ocean Dunes Hotel, Myrtle Beach, S.C., Sept. 18-21. Hosting the event will be Myrtle Beach Pavilion and Myrtle Beach Grand Prix/Action Amusements.

There will be four days of non-stop family entertainment oriented activities throughout the area, including golf tournaments for early arrivals; behind the scenes tours of numerous area FECs, miniature golf courses, and water parks; an opening show at The Dixie Stampede; and race car driving at North Myrtle Beach Grand Prix.

The event will be preceded on Sept. 16-17 with a two-day exhibitor training seminar conducted by Susan Friedman. She will focus on marketing and training ideas exhibitors can use during the two months prior to the IAAPA Convention and Trade Show. There will also be a seminar on booth design.

Pre-registration fees are $275 for members and $325 for non-members. The deadline is Aug. 27. For more information, contact IAAPA at (703) 836-4800; fax (703) 836-4801.

AMOA members appointed at regulators conference

The Spring Conference of the North American Gaming Regulators Association was held recently and saw the appointment of two AMOA board members to key committees.

AMOA government relations chairman Gene Winstead was appointed to NAGRA's standing committee on cyberspace gaming, and AMOA vice president Bill Treger was appointed to the committee on standards of coin-operated gaming devices.

A related conference, the National Council of Legislators from Gaming States, will be held this month, June 14-16, at the Hyatt Regency Tech Center in Denver, Colo.

Discussion subjects will include Internet, video, and telephone gaming; Indian gaming; gambling on the high seas; riverboat gaming; casinos at racetracks; and the privatization of the Connecticut lottery.

Web Watch

Always watchful of the cyberworld, here's an Intenet update for the coin-op industry:

☛ American Sammy Corp., maker of the video gun game *Zombie Raid,* as well as redemption standards like *Simple Simon* and *Coin Circus,* now has its own Home Page on the World Wide Web (http://www.sammyusa.com). Look for game tips and updates on new releases.

☛ AMOA can be reached over the Internet at both its Chicago (amoa@sba.com) and Washington (amoa_dc@sba.com) offices.

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Senate committee holds hearing on Indian gaming

Indian gaming is back on the front political burner in Congress following a Supreme Court decision earlier this year which took away tribes' rights to sue states which failed to negotiate gaming compacts in good faith.

The Senate Indian Affairs Committee last month held oversight hearings on the issue, taking testimony from state and federal officials, as well as gaming experts. At press time, tribal leaders had been invited, but that invitation to testify had then been withdrawn.

"Without a doubt, and by their own admission, states have used the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act compacting process to delay, frustrate, obstruct, and terminate tribal governmental gaming operations," said Rick Hill, chairman of the National Indian Gaming Association.

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt intends to invite public comment on how to proceed following the high court decision, but Hill and other Indian activists are pushing for the establishment of interim measures.

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Sign Here

Tornado Table Sports' founder Ed McCloud signs the final merger agreement with Valley Recreation Products. McCloud will become a vice president for the combined companies. Looking on are, (l-r): Valley's Scott Schroeder and Dick Shelton, Tornado's Dave Courington, and Valley's Doug Blair and James Griffiths.

News Briefs

☐ Coin Mechanisms Inc., maker of coin validating equipment, is pleased to announce the introduction of a toll free number for its friends and associates north of the border. Potential or repeat customers can reach the company's Chicago area office from anywhere in Canada by calling (800) 323-6498.

☐ Calendar Industries Inc., d.b.a. NW Coin Machine, has a new address, phone, and fax: 935 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Portland, OR 97214-3545; (503) 731-9964; fax (503) 731-9966.

☐ Ascension Productions reports that one of its Lazer Runner Battle Stations has opened at Paramount's Carowinds in Charlotte, N.C. Although the park is only open on weekends, early revenues indicate this will be a profitable location, the company says. Carowinds is an 83-acre theme park which features 10 themed areas relating to Carolina culture.

☐ The 20th Annual Nightclub and Bar Exposition will be held Aug. 12-14 at the Omni Rosen Hotel and adjacent Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla. Call (601) 236-5510 for information.

☐ National Cabinet Lock is now ISO 9002 registered and the company plans to consolidate all production to its state-of-the-art Mauldin, S.C., facility by June 1996. "The International Standards Organization (ISO) 9002 approval opens our company to serve more customers, at home and abroad," said company president David Bowers. ▲

LEAGUES AND TOURNAMENTS

- ✔ Arachnid created the first soft-tip dart league format in 1977.
- ✔ 16 state regional tournament circuit throughout the US.
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- ✔ Automatic calculation for NDA "SPRE" and points per round.

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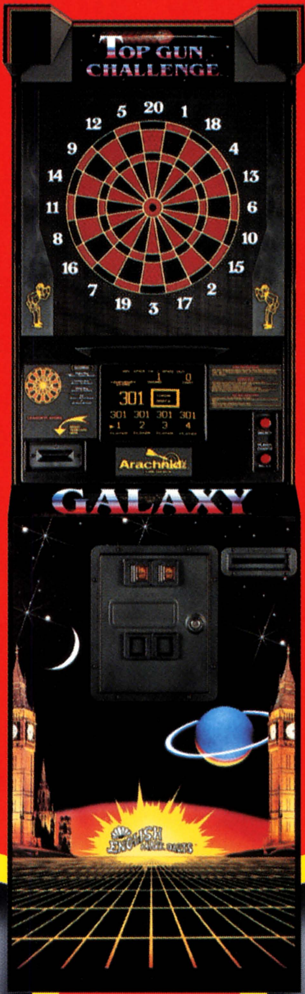

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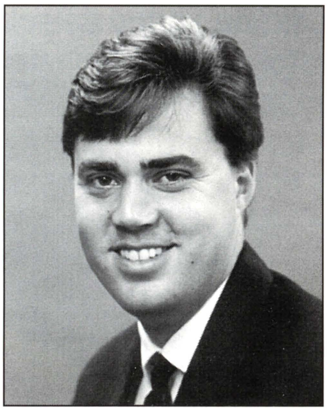
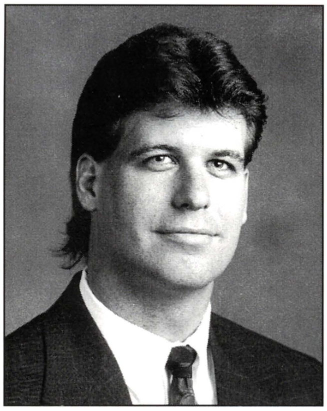
Schroeder and Hall take new Valley posts



Scott Schroeder



Jim Hall

Valley Recreation Products has promoted Scott Schroeder to the post of vice president of marketing and named Jim Hall as an international sales representative.

Schroeder joined Valley in 1991 in sales and soon moved up through international sales and product manager positions to become marketing manager in 1993 and director of marketing in 1994.

Stated Richard Shelton, Valley president: "This promotion reflects the outstanding contributions Scott has made toward Valley's continuing growth over the past five years. His role has been a vital one in so many disciplines, including marketing strategy, product development, and other critical areas."

Doug Blair, who was previously responsible for marketing and sales, will now direct Valley's growing sales and service organizations as vice president of sales.

Shelton explained, "These changes will enable both Doug and Scott to concentrate their energies toward their specific areas and ensure that Valley and its customers are able to capitalize on new products, programs, and opportunities."

Hall moves from his post as Midwest sales representative to international sales. He will work with customers outside of the continental United States, primarily in Canada. He will report to James Griffiths, vice president of International operations.

Griffiths commented, "Jim has demonstrated an exceptional appreciation for strong customer service and relationships. He has played an important part in the achieving of Valley's strong market position, and we are convinced he will continue to make a major contribution to the company's future success."

Hurley joins NAMA

William Hurley has joined the National Automatic Merchandising Association as Midwest manager and counsel. He will be the NAMA liaison with a number of affiliated state councils, especially in the Midwest.

Hurley comes to NAMA from the staff of U.S. Rep. Michael Flanagan (R-Chicago). His career has included work with Chicago law firms and other trade associations, which has prepared him well for his new duties.

Birmingham Vending adds Kopack in Florida

Birmingham Vending has appointed Dave Kopack as a sales executive for the company's new office in Dania, Fla. Kopack will handle music and games in south Florida, including the Ft. Meyers and Naples areas.

Charles Caplan, general manager of Birmingham's Florida office, said, "We are most fortunate to have a man of Dave's caliber join us."

Dave entered the industry selling Rowe jukeboxes and a variety of equipment for Top Distributing of Rochester, N.Y. Later he worked with Merit Industries, and most recently managed the Pittsburgh office of Mondial Intl. until it was sold to Green Coin.

Larry Vaughn, longtime sales executive for Birmingham Vending, added, "At last we have the staff to handle the fast growing business of south Florida."

Virtuality names three to staff

Virtuality Inc. has appointed two new regional sales managers to its U.S. sales team in David Patton and Lance Loesberg, and promoted Larry Preston in the technical service department.

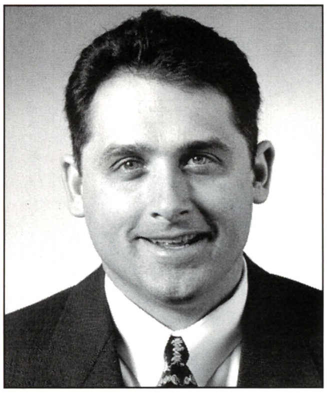
Patton will handle the central division while Loesberg will handle the western division. Both are responsible for overseeing the expansion of the company's installed virtual reality systems and maintaining existing customer relationships.

Patton's career includes posts with Monarch Business Systems and VIP Entertainment Group. Loesberg was formerly with MEB Technology, Combined Business Services, and National Food Products.

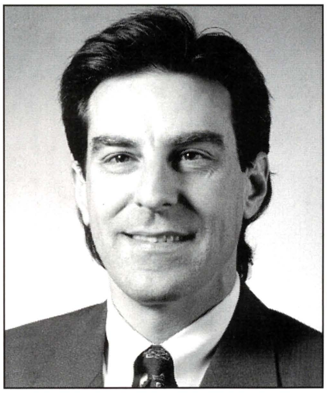
Preston moves from service manager to technical services supervisor to manage the technical services area by coordinating installation and maintenance for the company's entertainment systems nationwide. Before joining Virtuality he was a field service engineer for Metroplex Information Systems.

According to Chris Yewdall, vice president and general manager of Virtuality, "Following a 55 percent increase internationally in Virtuality's sales in 1995, I am confident that these additions will contribute to the company's continued success and growth."

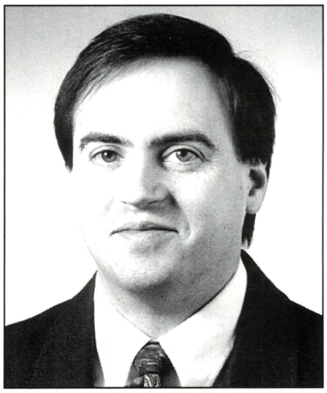
David Patton



Lance Loesberg



Larry Preston



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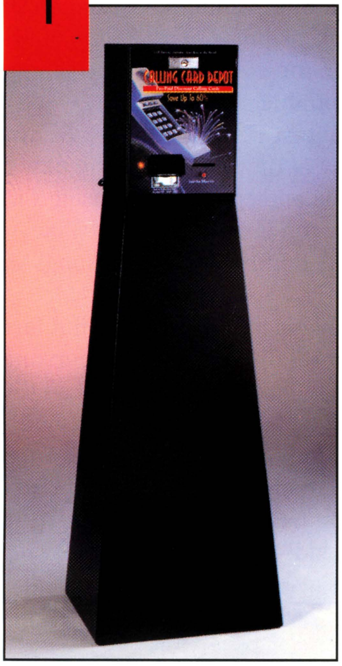

Model 801

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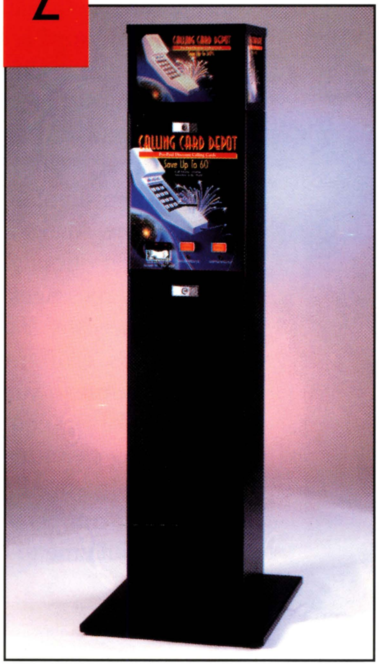

Model 802

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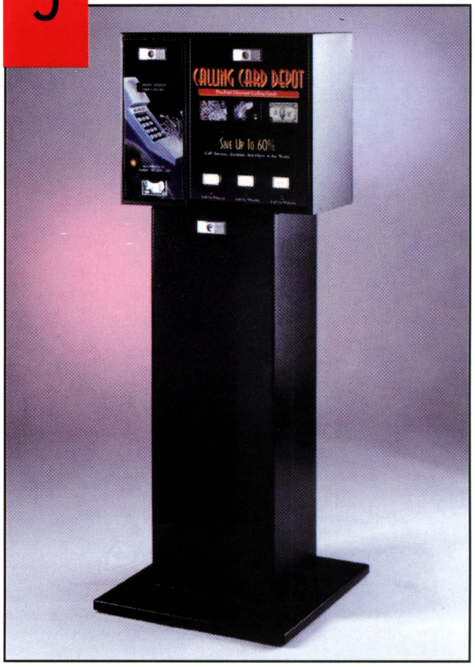

Model 803-D

Calling Card Depot™ vends discount long distance calling cards in three state-of-the-art machines that feature rugged, dependable service. A 4-sided marquee top adorns the two column model and a vacuum fluorescent dot-matrix moving sales message sign is available as an option for additional attraction.

These high-styled calling card vendors are made in one-column, two-column and three-column models to hold 200, 400, or 600 cards using tamper-proof and jam-proof Asahi-Seiko card dispensing units. Adding multiple columns to each machine allows more volume at the same price point or the ability to offer different price points for each column. Bill validators with built-in stackers accommodate up to 300 bills. Operations of all Calling Card Depot™ vending units are controlled by a proven Motorola solid-state microcontroller and proven logic to eliminate jackpots and free vends.

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Valley's James Griffiths and Laniel Automatic's Jean Coutu are all smiles at the Valley booth during ACME '96. Coutu accepted a crystal cup award for "Pool Table Distributor of the Year" from Griffiths for achieving the highest sales volume with Valley's entire pool table line for 1995.

"This is the second year in a row that Laniel Automatic has been number one in sales of our coin-op pool tables," said Griffiths, "which makes this achievement all the more remarkable. We cannot easily express our deep appreciation for the solid support Laniel Automatic and Jean have given us over the years. They are more than business associates, and we look forward to continuing and strengthening our relationship in the years ahead."

CUE
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Steve Young of The Pinball Resource, an 18-year-old pinball parts supplier, reports that his customer base is expanding at a steady rate and stretching "like a pinball rubber ring." To help meet this growth he has added Tim Ferrante to his staff as vice president of marketing. He also advises that he is on a buying crusade for obsolete pinball and other coin-op parts, paper, and related items.

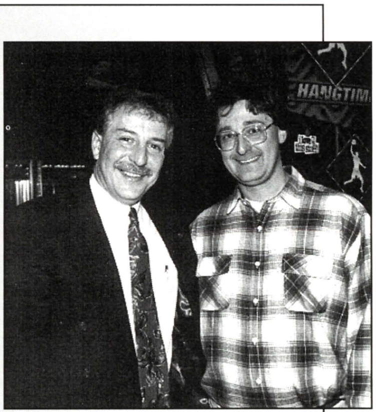
Young said, "We've already closed on two large inventory deals. It's a tedious process when you're sorting through thousands of part numbers, manuals, schematics, and such. Fortunately, we're finding rich caches of obsolete parts that have been inventoried and properly stored." Anyone looking for machine parts for pinballs of the '50s, '60s, '70s, and to a lesser extent the '80s, can reach Young at (914) 223-5613; fax (914) 223-7365, and e-mail (BResource@aol.com). The company also makes its own reproduction plastic and metal pinball parts.

Celebrate 25 YEARS Carousel
A QUARTER CENTURY OF MAKING HAPPY KIDS

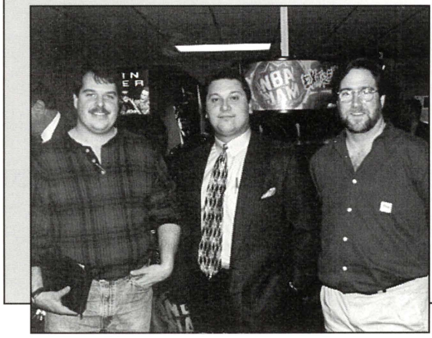
Carousel International conducted a "Smile Pretty" contest at the recent National Bulk Vendors Association show in Scottsdale, Ariz. Carousel customer Mark Pogue of MEPCO Inc. in Fresno, Calif., won the contest and a 10 percent discount on most Carousel products.

Participants in the contest could ride any of Carousel's new products. On display at the show were the new *Speedster II* video simulator ride and coupon-dispensing *Lil Squirt Fire Engine.* Also shown: the interactive *Kid Phone* novelty vendor that offers a collection of stories and songs with inspirational messages.

The *Speedster II* takes kids through a beautiful farmland and village; it offers several opportunities to personalize a retailers name in various scenes. The *Lil Squirt* can dispense coupons for 50 cents off a Miss Susie Moppet toy doll and sing-a-long cassette sold in retail establishments where the rides are placed. All this creative promotion from Carousel is part of the company's emphasis on its theme for 1996: "It's a wonderful time to be a kid!"



Over 500 operators and their families attended the Betson Enterprises post-ACME open house in Carlstadt, N.J. Said sales manager Tom Faranda: "Operator enthusiasm is at its highest level in years." Pictured, top: Tom Faranda (l) and Mark Zambek of Associated Amusements; bottom, (l-r): Rob Ritterhoff of Castle Casino, Chris Cirillo of Betson, and Steve Decredico of Boardwalk Casino.



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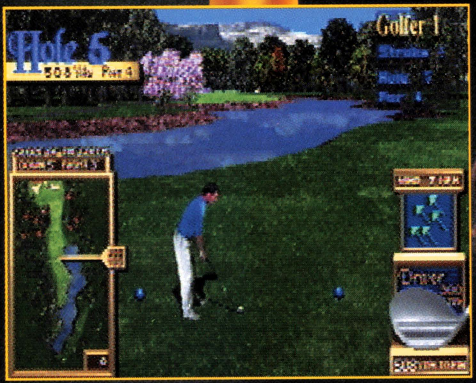
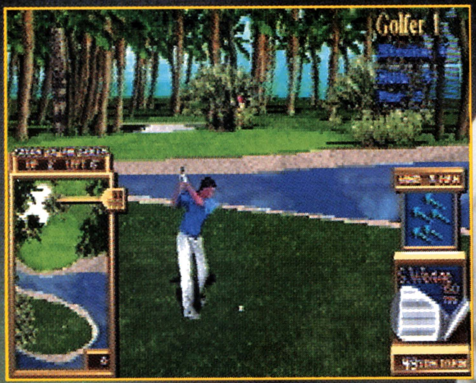
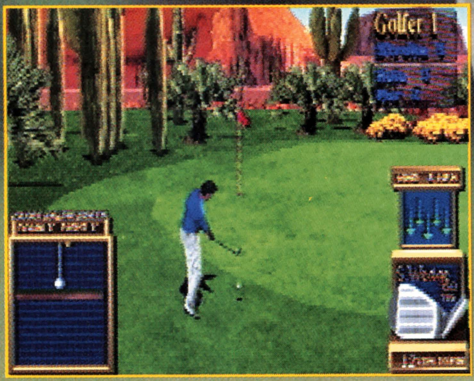
TOURNAMENT EDITION







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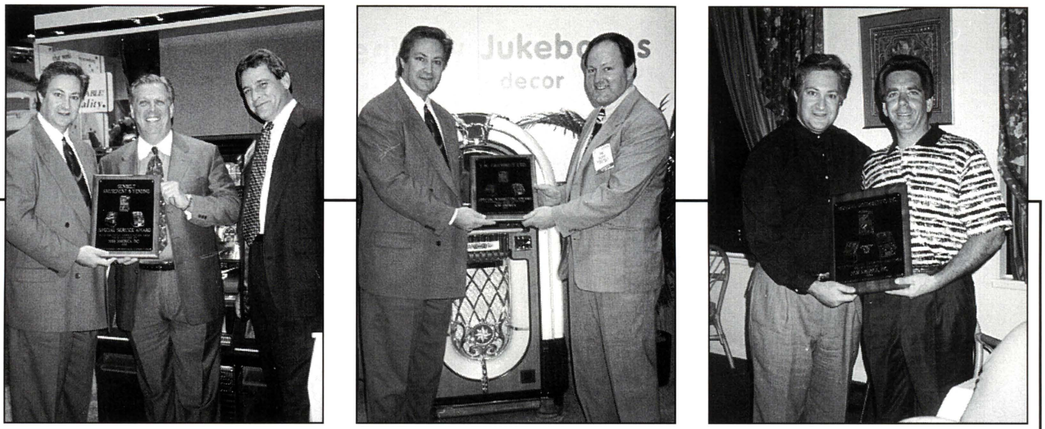

NSM-America recently honored Sunbelt Amusement, Gilchrist Vending, and Mondial Distributing for their excellent representation of NSM and its jukebox line. NSM's senior vice president John Margold presented commemorative plaques to each company.

Sunbelt received the "Special Service Award." Said Margold, "As an NSM distributor Sunbelt not only worked hard to sell our jukeboxes, but has gone to extraordinary levels to provide the service and support which our jukebox operators deserve. Strong after-sale service is the foundation of NSM and we truly appreciate the efforts of Sunbelt in providing solid service and parts support to their operators."

Gilchrist received the "Special Marketing Award." "Tom Gilchrist and Gilchrist Vending have worked extremely hard to market and sell NSM jukeboxes to certain non-traditional markets," explained Margold. "Their efforts have been rewarded and proven to be quite beneficial to both NSM and Gilchrist."

Mondial Distributing was named "1995 Distributor of the Year." Stated Margold, "Mondial, with its strong sales and service organization, has attained a level of sales unprecedented for any of NSM's U.S. distributors. Mondial's organization has been a partner of NSM for many years, and we look forward to continued success in the future."

Pictured, left, (l-r): John Margold of NSM, Dave Patterson and Doug Valentino of Sunbelt Amusement; center, (l-r): John Margold and Tom Gilchrist of Gilchrist Vending; right, (l-r): John Margold and Tony Yula of Mondial Distributing. ▲

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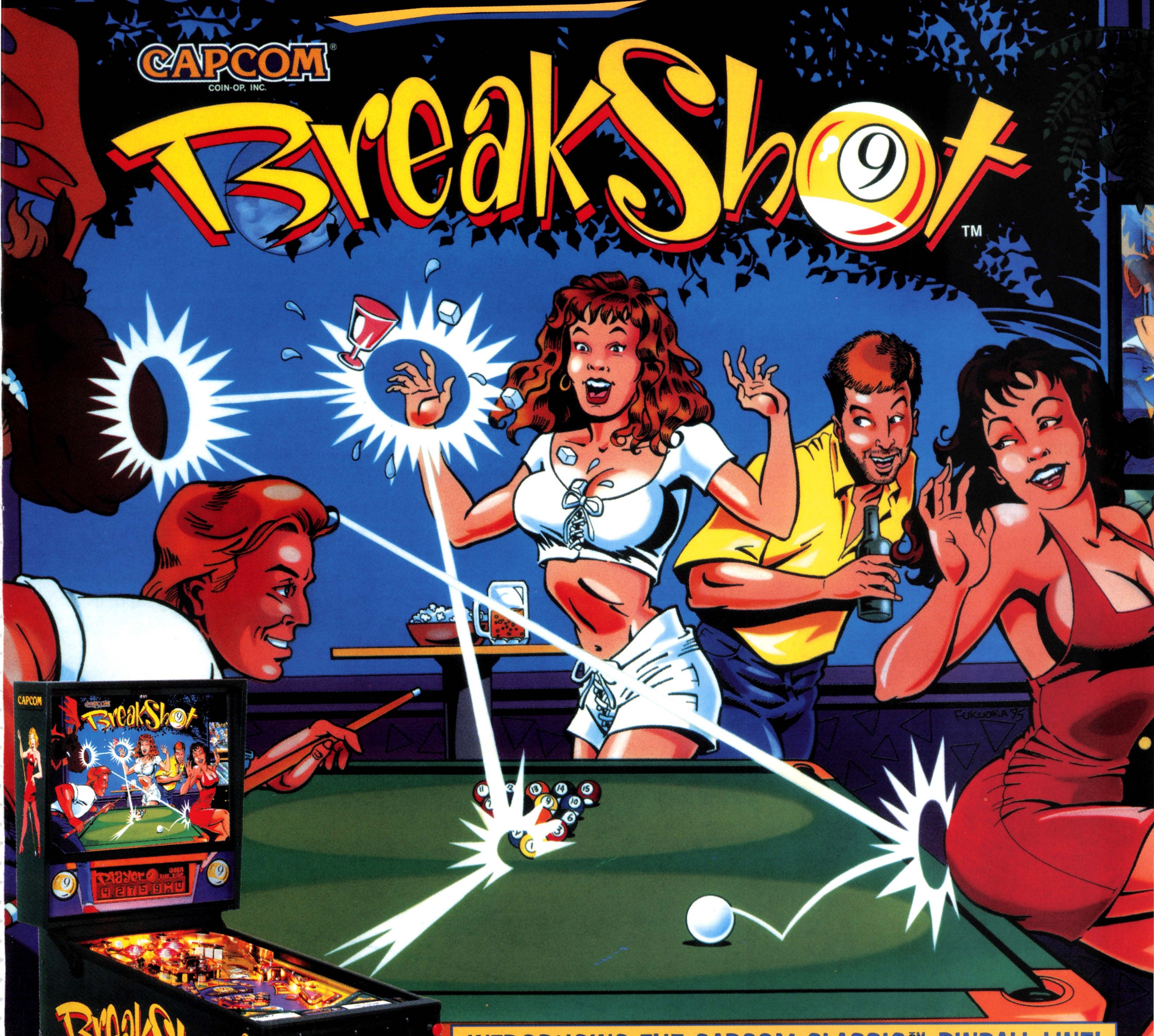

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Depth: 52 1/8"
Weight: Crated: 240 Lbs/108.6 Kg
Uncrated: 220 Lbs/99.5 Kg
Height (Max): 74 1/4" w/Levelers fully extended
Height w/Backbox Folded (Max): 52 1/4" w/Levelers fully extended

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American Dream Park to open in China

The first American Dream Park, which is due to open in August in Shanghai, People's Republic of China, has been the beneficiary of specialized training provided by International Theme Park Services Inc. of Cincinnati, Ohio.

ITPS is a consulting company that specializes in theme park design and operation. ITPS president Dennis Speigel is one of four partners that formed the American Dream Parks and Entertainment Group in 1994, a Hong Kong-based entertainment development company that plans to build five major theme parks in mainland China in a five-year period.

The first two parks will open late this summer, one in Shanghai and one in Guangzhou. ITPS has been responsible for the feasibility, design, master planning, operations planning, training, and recruitment of senior management. In addition, ITPS is presently conducting training for both American Dream Parks.

The mission is to "develop and operate the leading chain of theme parks in China, providing wholesome family entertainment of a world-class nature in an exciting, quality setting at affordable prices."

GTI looks at future of coin-op in Asia

China's developing amusement industry will be the focus of the Game Time International Expo coming later this month, June 29-July 1, at the Taipei World Trade Center in Taipei, Taiwan.

Visitors will be able to attend two significant seminars during the event: "A look at China's Developing Amusement Industry—Opportunities and Dangers" and "Trends in Taiwan's Amusement Market Today."

The show will be divided into two sections: one with 370 product booths and one for an international press area featuring amusement-related publications from around the world.

GTI expo'96

Among GTI's main objectives are identifying trends in Asia's burgeoning amusement industry, promoting and developing Taiwan's amusement industry on an international level, and nurturing a good relationship between the international amusement industry and the government of Taiwan.

Companies from over 20 countries have already expressed interest in either attending or exhibiting at GTI, according to show organizers. For more details, e-mail gametime@tpts1.seed.net.tw or fax 886-2-762-3873.

Play-By-Play sells European subsidiary

Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties Inc. has sold its European subsidiary, Restaurants Universal Espana, S.A., which owns and operates two restaurants in Spain.

Arturo Torres, chairman and CEO of Play-By-Play, said: "We view the sale of our restaurants as a positive move for Play-By-Play. It will allow our European management team to focus its efforts and capital on our successful core toy business in Europe, which has demonstrated strong growth and profitability since its inception."

Play-By-Play has license agreements with many corporations in the children's entertainment character business including Disney Enterprises, Warner Bros., Marvel Comics, and others.

AMOA Queensland hosts annual show

The Amusement Machine Operators Association of Queensland will host its annual trade show and convention Nov. 5-9 at the Royal Pines Resort on Queensland's Gold Coast.

The agenda will include an extensive seminar program, annual dinner and awards night, AMOAQ golf day, and an end of conference bash. Exhibits will showcase the latest in amusement equipment (no gambling products).

Because of the program, the show has been extended to five days instead of the usual four. The expansive social program will cater to many Australian and international delegates who choose to extend their stay in sunny Queensland, explained convention convenor Ken Priest.

For more details on the event, contact AMOAQ, 61-7-841-1021 (phone) or 61-7-841-1332 (fax).

Deighton opens consulting firm

Philip D. Deighton, general secretary of the Association of Arabian Amusement Attractions, has departed the Qatar Leisure & Tourism Development Corp. and established a new consulting firm, the International Leisure Management & Consultancy.

The new company will offer independent advice and assistance to parks and family entertainment centers on project development, general and operations management, marketing, events organization, and technical services including ride acquisition and maintenance.

Deighton will also apply his personal business contacts as a Middle East representative for manufacturers and suppliers. He has established a small office in Doha with secretarial and technical support. Deighton established the Aladdin's Kingdom family fun park and the AAAA (known as the 4As). The association represents over 100 parks and FECs throughout the Arabian Gulf region.

In the United Kingdom he can be reached at +44 (O) 1489 570289 (phone and fax) and in Doha, State of Qatar, Arabian Gulf, (+974) 326375 (phone and fax).

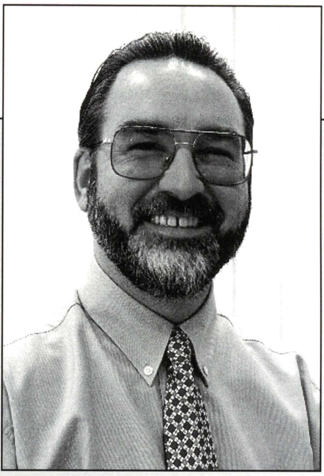
South American Amusement Leisure Exhibition

Salex

Mart Centre, Sao Paulo, Brazil

25th - 27th July, 1996

Thomson appoints sales staff and distributor


Simon Molseed

Graham Guenigault

Thomson Training & Simulation has appointed Simon Molseed and Graham Geunigault to the sales force of its Entertainment Systems division. In addition, the company has named Nu Metro Entertainment (Pty.) Ltd. as its exclusive distributor for the range of Venturer simulators in the rapidly developing South African leisure market.

Molseed will be regional sales manager for Asia/Pacific and the Middle East. He will be responsible for the company's sales and marketing activities in regions that will play a key part in plans for worldwide business expansion.

Guenigault will be responsible for United Kingdom sales and software products. He will also be charged with expanding ride software sales worldwide.

In South Africa, Nu Metro, part of the Ibn rand leisure and entertainment giant CNA Gallo Group, has a network of over 160 cinemas as well as other leisure businesses. Its recently established games division is developing family entertainment centers adjacent to the cinemas. The FECs will feature both the Venturer Motionride and new Venturer S2 simulators.

Nu Metro plans to purchase around seven Venturer Motionride simulators over the next two years and a number of Venturer S2s. The first simulator is located at Randburg Waterfront, one of Johannesburg's major shopping and entertainment complexes.

In other Thomson news, the company announces a contract with Pathe, a leading French cinema, television, and press group, for a Venturer simulator. It will be specially designed and themed and will be a key attraction in its new multiplex cinema at Toulon. Pathe has over 150 cinema screens in France.

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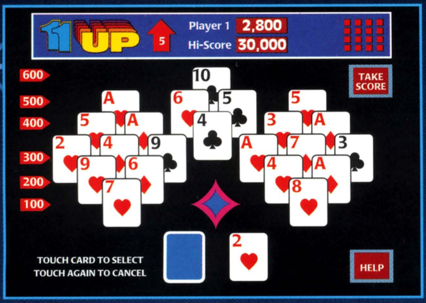
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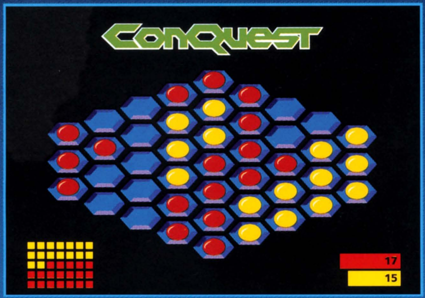
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15

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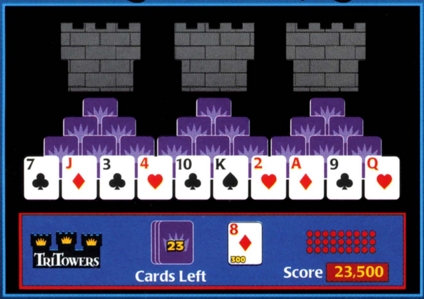
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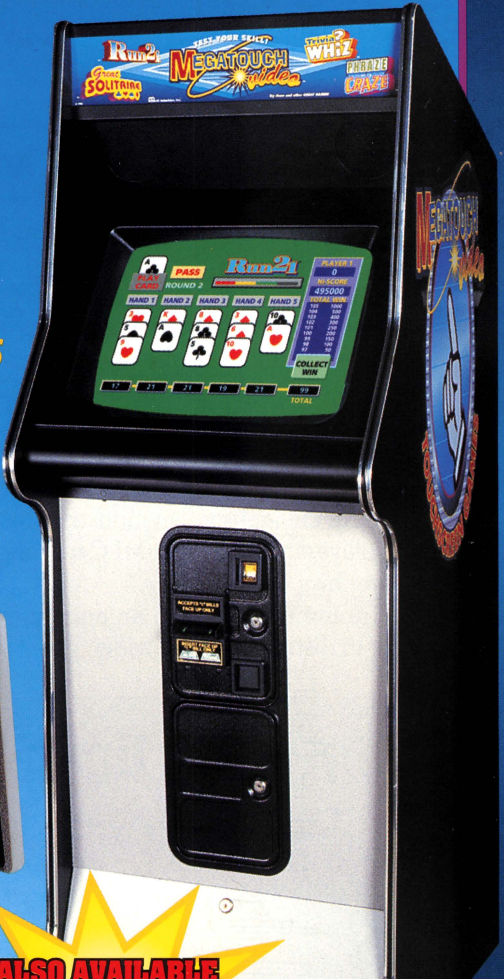
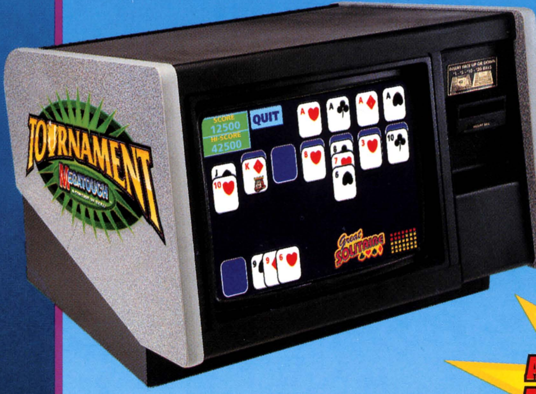

Run 21
Megatouch video
Great Solitaire
Trivia Whiz
Phraze Craze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Bankshot goes international

The Bankshot Basketball organization has seen a sharp rise in the international expansion of the sport of basketball, not only in the United States but also Japan, Canada, Israel, and the Phillippines.

One of the factors influencing this expansion is that the National Basketball Association now connects with several foreign markets by airing games across the world and having the Jam Session Tour visit multiple international cities.

Bankshot has been involved with NBA activities over the years and acknowledges that this association has helped Bankshot's presence in foreign markets.

As an example, international sports manufacturer Mizuno is distributing Bankshot Basketball in Japan. Eleven locations are expected to be in place this summer.

Bankshot is now in Canada in New Brunswick, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, with Ontario to follow soon. There are several Bankshot courts in Israel, and the next areas for expansion will include the French, Austrian, and Benelux amusement markets.

Tuning launches MLC system

Tuning Electronic Entertainment of Hamburg, Germany, and Data East are joining forces to introduce the new MLC (motherless cassette system) in Europe.

The MLC consists of a motherboard and gameboard housed in half a cassette. System advantages include 32-bit technology, eight sound channels, 3-D capability, shadow-rendering capability, thousands of colors, and a split-screen.

Reymond Safft, managing director of Tuning, said, "We are really excited by the MLC system. It will set new standards in the amusement industry. Since 3-D games are catching players' interest, the MLC will enable operators to get 3-D graphics inexpensively."

Tuning entered into an agreement in March with Data East to distribute all DE video game products in Europe.

Improving market in Mexico ready for EXIME

Steady signs of improvement are being seen in the economy of Mexico, which leads organizers of the upcoming Exposicion Internacional de Maquinas de Entretenimiento (EXIME) trade show optimistic about the Aug. 7-8 event at the World Trade Center in Mexico City.

★ ★ ★

EXIME

Exposición Internacíonal de Máquinas de Entretenimient

EXIME is sponsored by the American Amusement Machine Association, which recently mailed out exhibitor information. Over 100 exhibitors are expected to display product and welcome suppliers, distributors, operators, investors, and developers.

Show organizers stress the importance of maintaining a presence in this market during its rebuilding process. For more details, contact W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708) 333-9292; fax (708) 333-4086.

ENADA draws record crowd

ENADA, the annual coin machine trade show in Italy, welcomed 12,401 visitors March 14-17 to the Rimini Trade Fair Centre in Rimini, Italy, to view the latest advances in entertainment technology.

Visitors had ample opportunity to develop business contacts at the event, which included exhibits from 130 Italian companies and 40 foreign companies. Of the total number of visitors, 800 were from abroad.

One of the major topics discussed at ENADA was Italian Law 425, which introduced new regulations for coin-op machines on which players' skill plays a more important role than luck, permitting them to win up to 10 free games or 10 tokens for use on the machines in an establishment, or a voucher to be exchanged for other items with a modest financial value.

The show is organized by Rimini Trade Fair in collaboration with Sapar-Agis.

Virtuality licenses HMD for Japanese market

Virtuality Group plc has licensed its consumer head-mounted display (HMD) technology to Takara Co. Ltd. and Media Robotics Co. Ltd. Takara plans to launch the HMD in the Japanese market in September.

Mr. Yasumi Suzuki, general manager of the HMD research and development department, stated: "The pre-production units have performed well ahead of our expectations, delivering exceptional clarity and unmatched resolution at this price point. Our research suggests that consumers throughout our major markets have been waiting for a high-quality HMD and our initial first year target for Japan is 60,000 units.

The consumer HMD will connect to various audio and video sources including home game consoles, video players, and camcorders.

Said Dennis Ohryn, chairman of Virtuality: "The agreement is a major step forward for the company. In addition to endorsing our low-cost consumer VR technologies, it significantly strengthens our position in the important Japanese market and provides us with our first exposure to the consumer."

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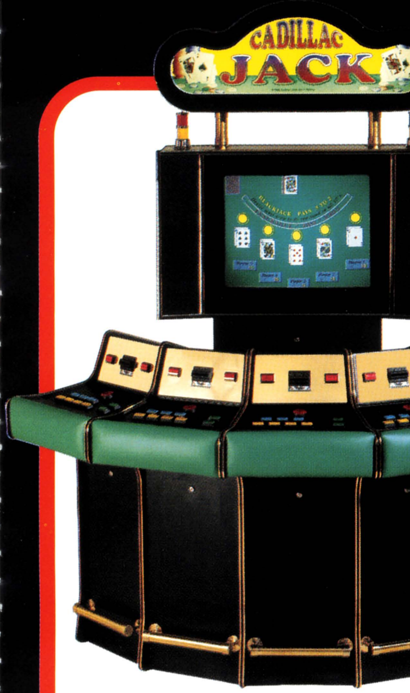
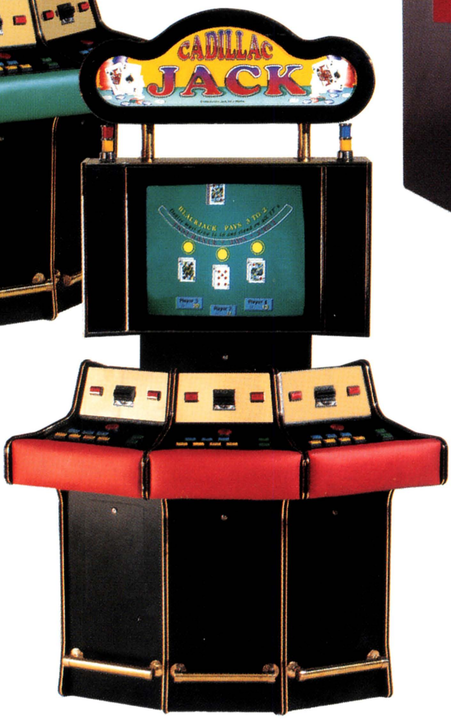
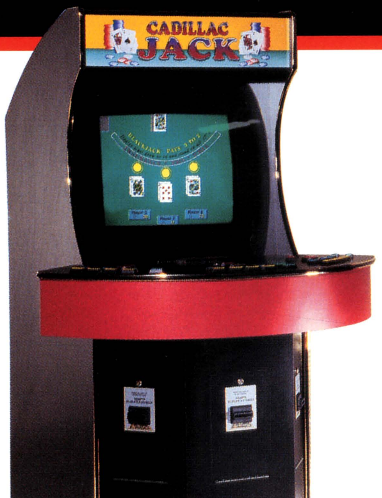


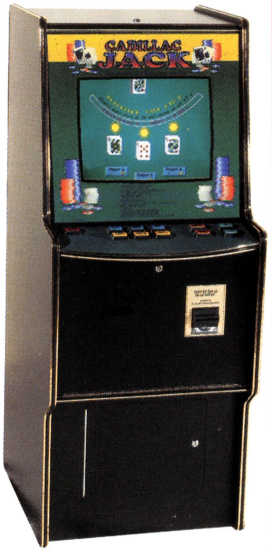
DELUXE 5-PLAYER
Total dimensions:
92"w x 82"d x *75"h



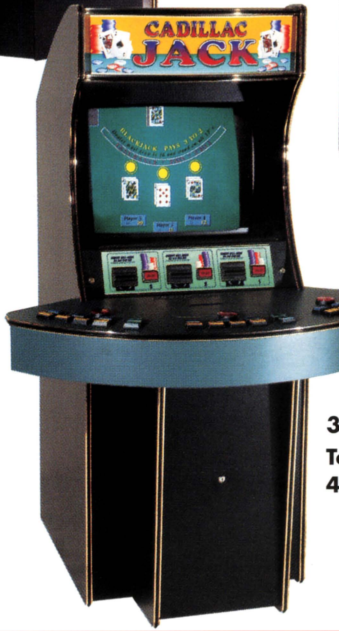
DELUXE 3-PLAYER
Total dimensions: 62"w x 82" x *75"h
*Deluxe marquee extra 18" - 24"h



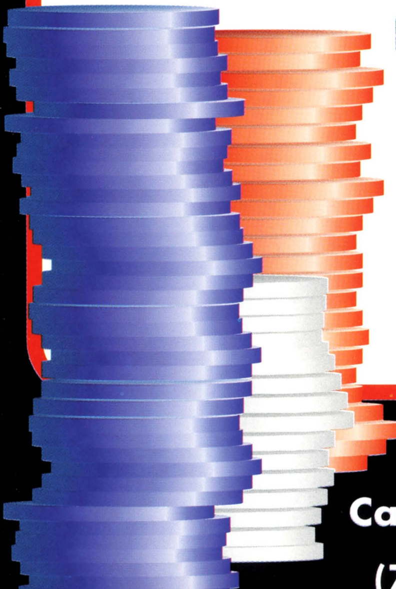
3-PLAYER STREET-1
Total dimensions:
52"w x 52"d x 75"h



ONE PLAYER
Total dimensions:
25"w x 30"d x 60"h



3-PLAYER STREET-2
Total dimensions:
49"w x 49"d x 75"h



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Bally Gaming Africa receives award

At a recent awards ceremony of over 600 gaming executives from around the globe, Bally Gaming Africa's general manager Warren Banks received the honor of "Manufacturer of the Year" for the African market

The award was bestowed by the magazine, Gaming for Africa. The magazine's publisher Andre Gouws commented, "Warren received the overwhelming vote based on the fact that he is not merely a salesman, but also an honest businessman possessing outstanding long-term vision."

Banks' nomination was based on excellence of service, public relations, customer care, ability to deliver, and reliability. All the major casino operators in southern Africa were consulted before the decision was made.

International Calendar

June 6-8

4th Expo Diversiones, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. Call 52-3-614-3015; fax 52-3-615-1483.

June 29-July 1

GTI Expo '96, Taipei World Trade Center, Taipei, Taiwan. Call 886-2-760-7407; fax 886-2-762-3873.

August 7-8

EXIME, Mexico City, Mexico, Contact W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708) 333-9292; fax (708) 333-4086.

September 12-14

JAMMA '96, Nippon Convention Center, Makuhari Messe, Ciba City, Japan. Contact JAMMA, +81-3-3438-2363; fax +81-3-3438-2721.

September 24-26

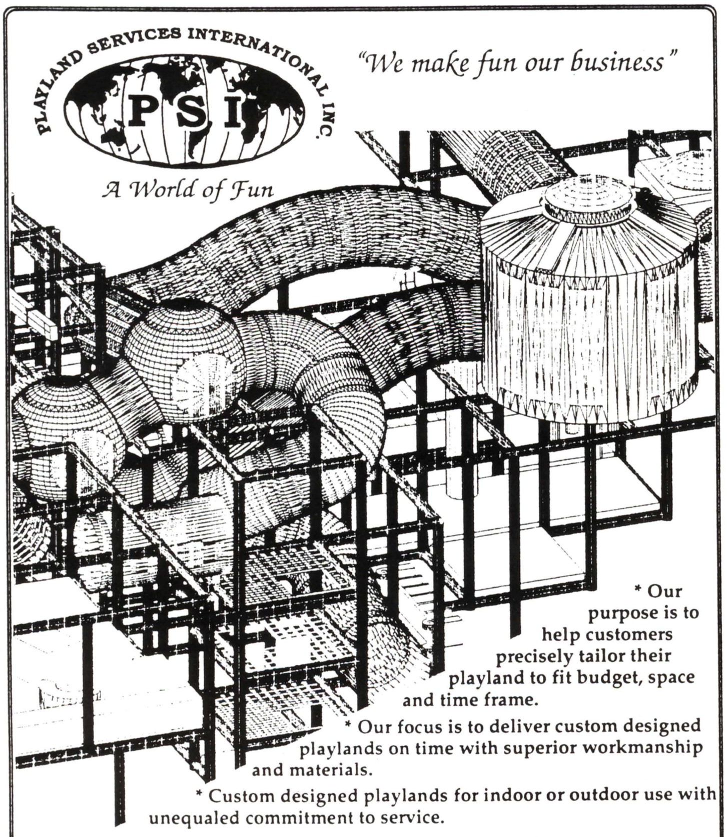
International Leisure Industry Week, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, United Kingdom. Contact Mark Sherrard, 01932-564455; fax 01932-570860.

October 30-November 1

Gamex '96, Johannesburg, South Africa. Contact John Slattery, +44 161 624 3687; fax +44 161 665 1260.

November 5-9

AMOAQ '96, Royal Pines Resort, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia. Contact Ken Priest, 01-7-3841-1021; fax 01-7-3841-1332. ▲



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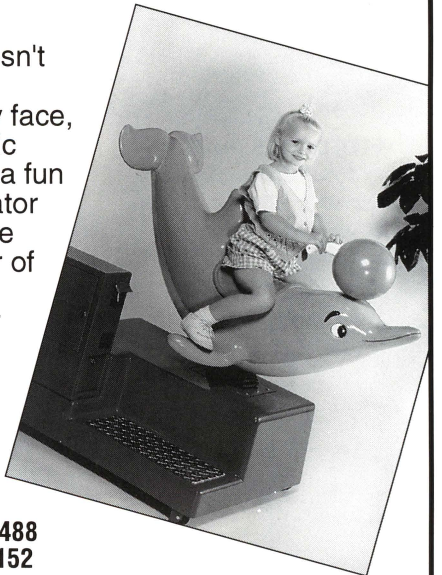

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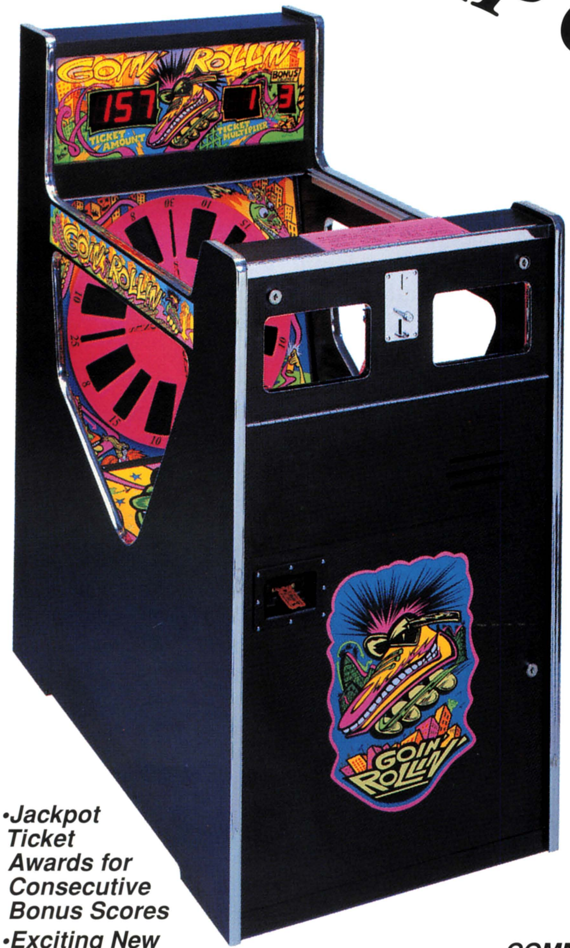
GOIN' ROLLIN'
157
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TICKET AMOUNT
TICKET MULTIPLIER
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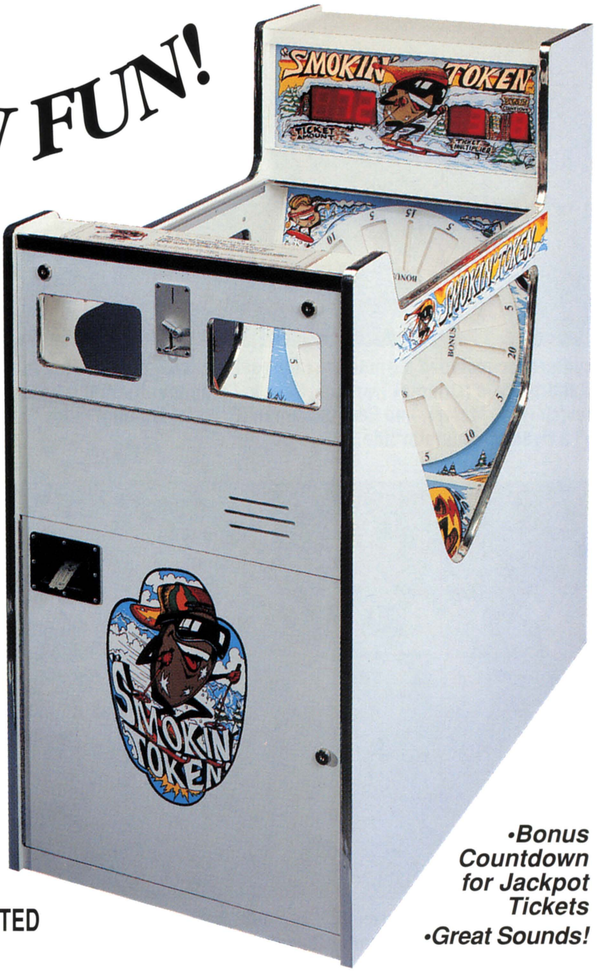
GOIN' ROLLIN'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The conference included a trip to the impressive Enchanted Castle. From left: Sandra Doyle (Oriental Trading), Sharon Culpepper (Disney), Valerie Cognevich (Play Meter), and Paul Brinkman (Oriental Trading) enjoy "The Rage" a riveting simulator ride.

Towards the end of the conference, these folks were put up front and anyone remembering all of their names and their companies won a prize. The point? To show how observant people really are in remembering faces. Note: no one won the prize!

Paul Brinkman and Sondra Doyle of Oriental had a display set up for the attendees. Here they are with Sharon Culpepper of Disney and another attendee named Trudy, who operated a water park and community center in the Chicago area.

The International Association of Family Entertainment Centers (IAFEC) teamed up with What's New for Family Fun Centers for their first annual management conference, held in the Chicago area in mid-April. The leaders of the sessions were Barbara Fagan of Fagan & Associates and Nancy Lemas, formerly of Kids World and now head of her own consulting company.

The focus of the conference was to address ways that large and small businesses can become more successful in their marketing efforts. "Any business, large or small, can create a market presence that is big for its consumer," contended Ms. Fagan. "Any business that wishes to increase its share of their customers' entertainment dollar must adopt revolutionary marketing strategies that have customers experience the personal connection they so strongly desire."

The 50-plus attendees, in various circumstances from not-open-yet like Hickory Dickory Dock to veteran FEC owners like Fun Plex, covered subjects like a company's mission statement, competitive assessments, defining product/service mixes, market research, promotions, creating and designing materials, service, customer connections, and employee relations. There was even a short session covering dealing with your trade publications and writing press releases!

Each topic was complete with worksheets that gave each attendee a unique insight into his own operation. Each was presented with a demographic report for his own area, which one attendee said in itself was more than worth the trip.

Featured speaker Barry Eigen perked the audience up with his humorous look, while delivering a strong message about employee relations. "Bosses and employees don't see things the same way," he cautioned. "Bosses should give their employees the right to act like they own the place! We must speak the other person's language; we must connect. Your employees must connect with your customers. It is up to you to give your employees the incentive to represent you like you want to be represented."

Here are a few comments from attendees:

"I found the subject of sticking to your mission statement most informative."

"I think I have learned some things about working with my employees."

"This was a valuable tool to get us where we want to be."

"Contrary to what I've been taught, people are willing to share information."

"I think this conference covered all the bases."

"We knew all the pieces but were having trouble putting them all together."

"I don't see why this conference isn't held in conjunction with Fun Expo. We're there already so it would save a trip."

"I think the sessions were too basic for what it was hyped to be."

IAFEC executive director Carol Sjolander said, "Since this was the first conference, I'm sure there are things we'd do differently. But on the whole, I think it was very beneficial to those who attended." ▲

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Dilated Pupils
Heart Palpitations
Twitching joy-stick fingers
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UNIFORM
ATTRIBUTES
PRIVILEGES
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B) ANTONIO MCDYESS
C) JERRY STACKHOUSE
D) KEVIN GARNETT
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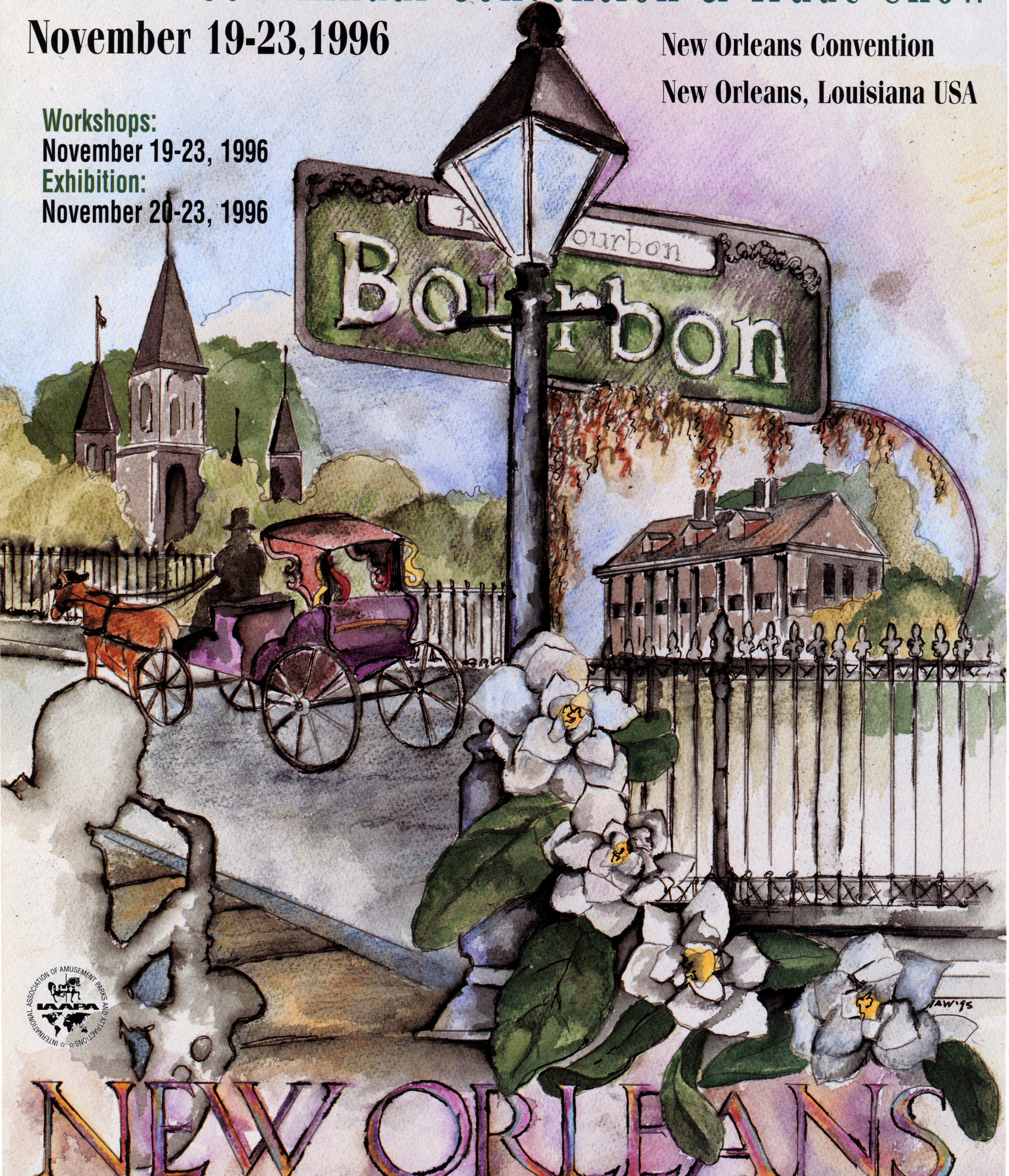
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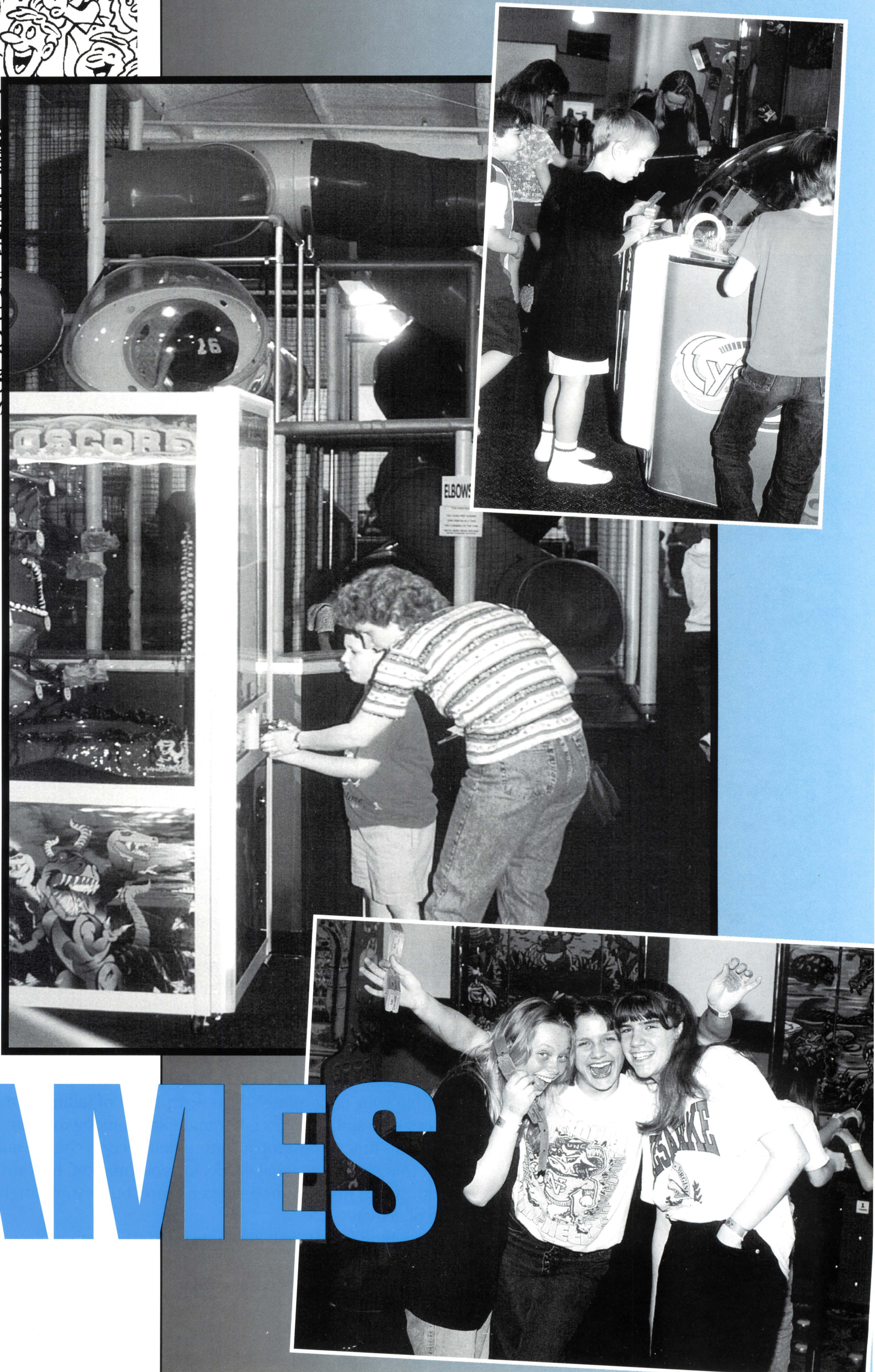
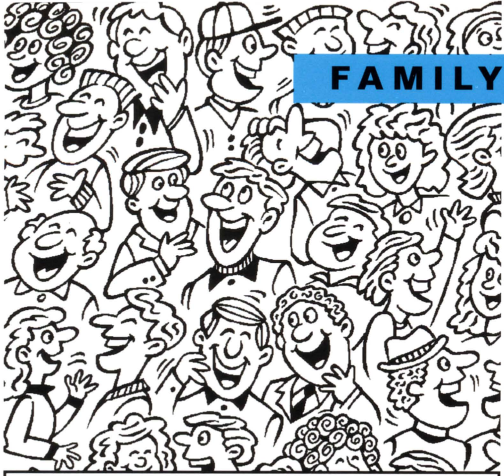
FUN & GAMES





by Michael C. Getlan

Are you planning an FEC, opening one soon, or revitalizing an existing location? Play Meter's annual Family Entertainment issue comes just in time for those taking bold steps forward. As Smith College president Ruth Simmons says, "You have to take risks and also go against conventional wisdom—conventional wisdom doesn't make for startling advances."

Begin with advice from FEC owner/operator and consultant Michael C. Getlan, an advocate of hands-on management who can jump-start your creative side. Follow with highlights of brand-new fun centers, an update on the growing interest in laser tag, and a feature on a perennial favorite—go-karts. For good measure, check out the views of major trade associations and learn from the experiences of longtime redemption proponent and consultant Frank Seninsky.

Innovation

IN FEC OPERATIONS:

Go ahead and take a chance!

The operation of a family entertainment center or any business must deal with changing markets, market preferences, and product offerings. To do that effectively a strategic plan should include a predisposition towards constant innovation. This can serve as a major force in a plan of operation or play a minor part, but the strategy of "riding the wave of change" can be a creative, motivating, and energizing way to cope with the trends that affect every business.

PERSISTENCE

Innovation needs to be a constant search for new items for your redemption center, new games to place in your center, and new ways to serve your guests. This has to be an ongoing, constant attitude among your management and staff. halfhearted attempts will not cut it here.

Rotate your games in your center; both by simply changing the position of the games and by trying new product. Look for new attractions for your FEC. Try new food items and new party packages. Try almost anything that seems to make sense. Try, try, try!

Read everything that comes out in the industry and in the popular press about marketing. Business guru Tom Peters says, "It's not ready, aim, fire—it's ready, fire, aim!" Doing is more important than the discussion that often precedes it. By the time your management finishes the debate, it's often too late to make the changes that have been discussed. Your competition has already done it, and you have lost the competitive advantage. Speed is king.

Put management goals in place that foster these concepts and develop a culture of change!

IMPROVEMENT

Improvements only come as a result of making mistakes. When asked how to increase the chances of success in an endeavor, Tom Watkins of IBM responded, "Double your failure rate!" This acceptance of failure as a mechanism for developing successful activities is commonplace among top companies.

It takes time to develop a culture that accepts change and error. Be bold. Try a lot of things and see what works for your market. Reward attempts within your organization. Reward success even more, but reward attempts to encourage this type of activity.

Punishing failure only discourages staff members from trying new ideas. Remember that any type of personalized service to your guests will probably come from one bright staff member who will go out on a limb for your organization.

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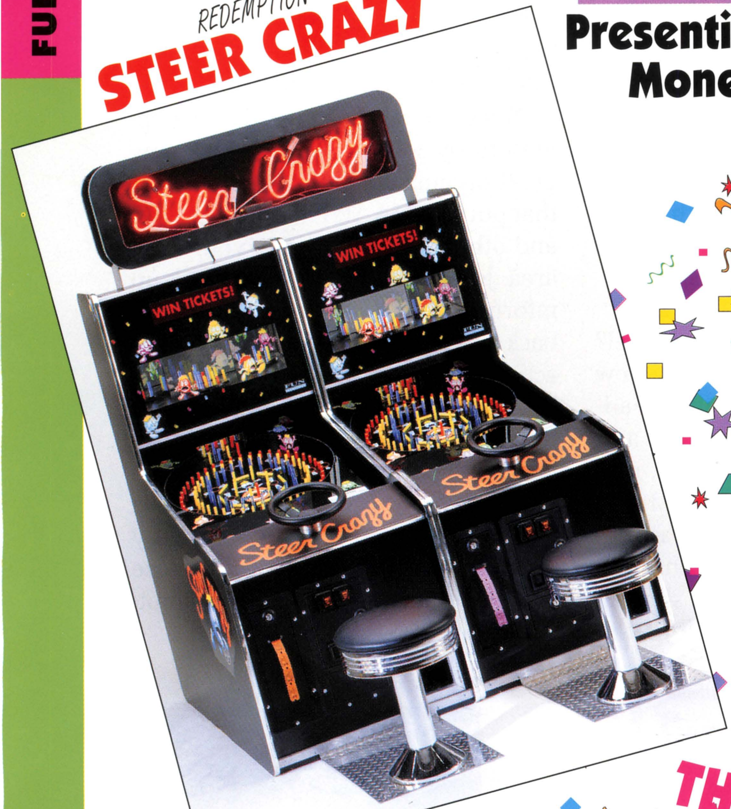
Steer Crazy
WIN TICKETS!
WIN TICKETS!
Steer Crazy
Steer Crazy

PRIZE VENDOR

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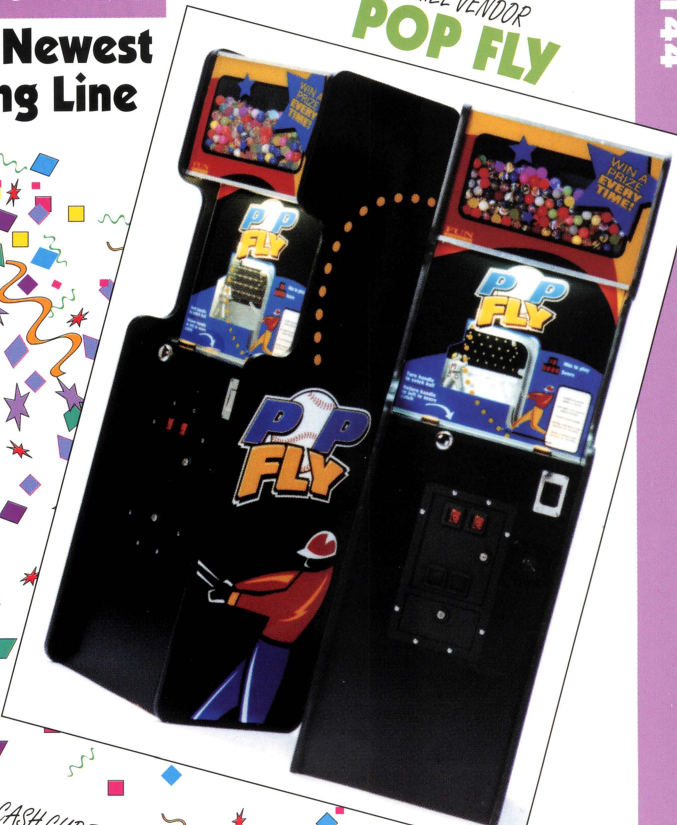
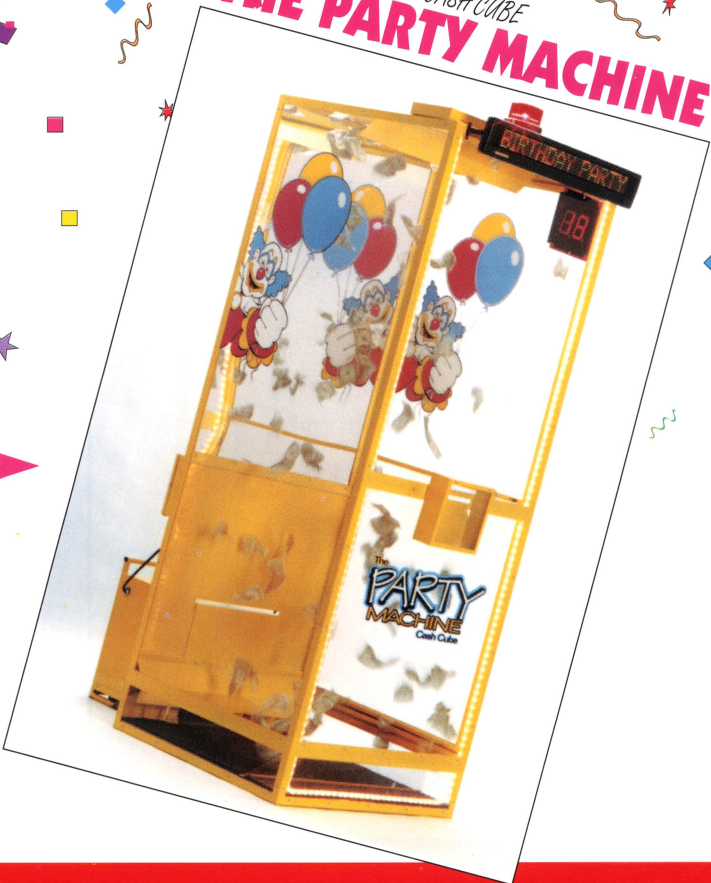

WIN A PRIZE EVERY TIME!
WIN A PRIZE EVERY TIME!
POP FLY
POP FLY
POP FLY

CASH CUBE

THE PARTY MACHINE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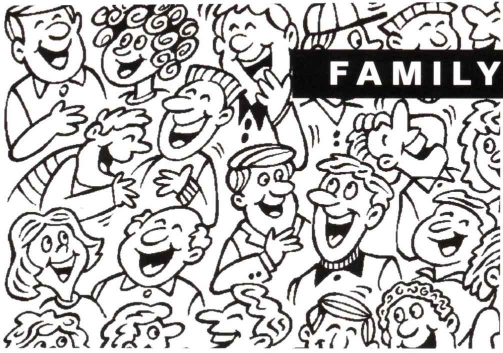

> **"*Innovation has to be an ongoing attitude among management and staff. Halfhearted attempts will not cut it.*"**

Give your staff the freedom to do this for you.

MODELING

One of the ways that an organization can quickly develop strategies for success is by modeling. Modeling is a process by which a successful operation is examined and then duplicated piece by piece. This is a long and difficult job, but it can produce great things if the right operation is chosen to model. Choose wisely.

The only way to change the results of your operations is to change the way your organization operates. Changes in operation produce changes in results. No changes in operating will result in no changes. Simple concept.

The real question in modeling is how far you and your organization will go. If you pick the right model, go all the way. The depth of your modeling will determine just how much of the same kinds of results you will get. Again, choose your model well.

NETWORKING

How will you find a model? Where can you find innovative new ideas for your center? Besides reading about all kinds of business and the FEC business in particular, network with other operators at shows and on the phone. If an operator is not a direct competitor, generally there will be no objection to sharing information with you. Don't forget to offer your methods in return.

You can easily link up with other operators by joining one of the many great organizations that exist just for that purpose: IAAPA, IAFEC, AMOA, and other organizations in your local area. Join and ask questions. Soak up information like a sponge. Then go back and put ideas into action, because action is the only thing that gets results.

The attitude of innovation can be a bright light that illuminates your business and lights the path to greater satisfaction for you and your staff. It is a creative path that opens up to many different directions, but it is for those who are willing to make the attempt. Take a chance—for a change! ▲

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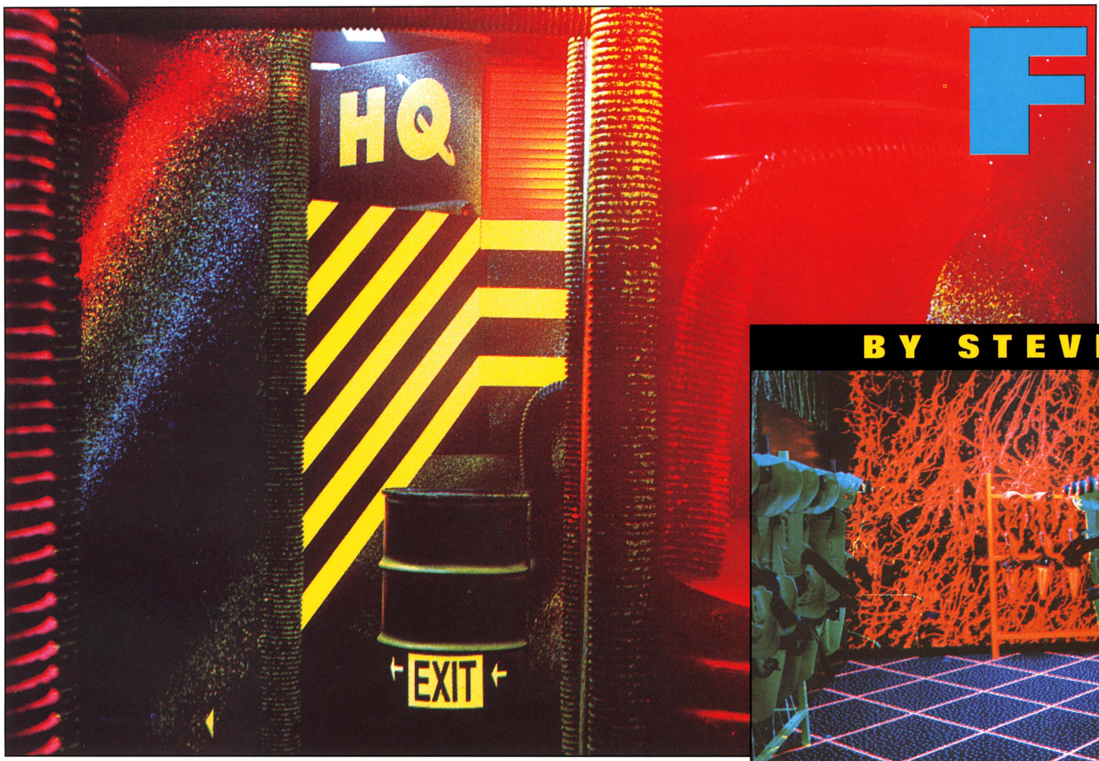
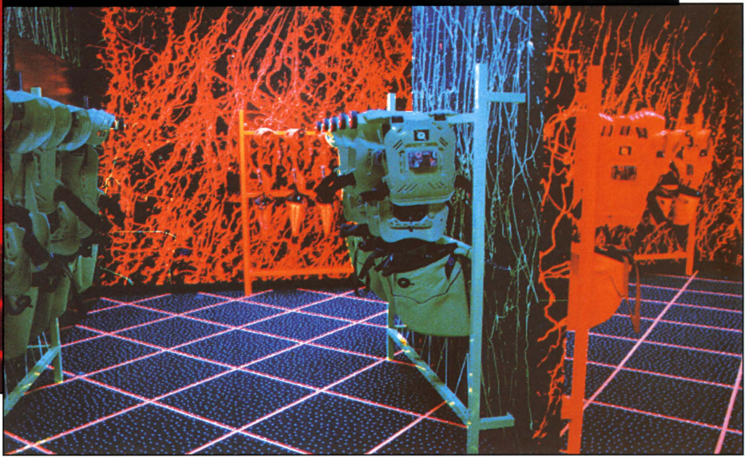
West Coast laser tag centers redefining FUN



BY STEVE WHITE



> *As part of its rapid growth strategy in California, laser tag operator Q-ZAR West has incorporated a new games division to focus on coin-op amusement as part of its strategy to capture a larger share of the market.*

Is laser tag profitable in a family fun center? While that question is usually framed from an FEC operator's perspective, a reversal of roles is beginning to take shape in the industry, and a number of laser tag facilities across the country are adding attractions targeted at the entire family.

"In the past it wasn't a place where you hung out," said Dennis Miller, director of operations for Q-ZAR West. "Now it's very focused on having the family stay for the whole day. It's more of a destination point."

Q-ZAR West is one of the companies exploring this new trend with its recent addition of a game division as well as the introduction of food service, party rooms, and other entertainment attractions such as large screen televisions and video walls.

The company, which is in partnership with laser tag manufacturer Q-ZAR USA and headed up by that firm's president Tom Butler, currently operates nine California locations ranging in size from 8,000 to 17,000 square feet. Sites include Chico, Castro Valley, Dublin, Freemont, San Diego, San Francisco, and San Jose.

Miller, who has been with Q-ZAR for three years, said some of the locations

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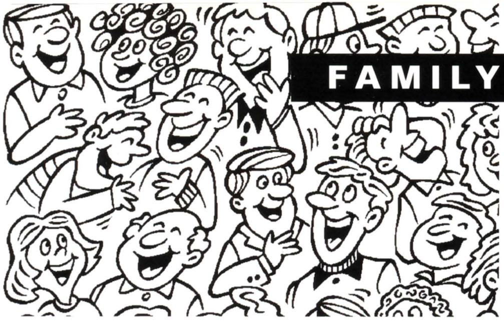

The crowds at Q-ZAR West's newest fun center in Chico, Calif., are a sure sign of popularity.

were independently operated before they came together in the last six months. "It has grown from a franchise arrangement to a more corporate structure. We've been able to bring all these locations under one roof."

This enables them to form a unified front in pricing and marketing and has resulted in a television advertising campaign in the Bay area. "We're all on the same page and we pool all the resources," Miller said. "It has made a big difference."

Q-ZAR West plans to open four to six more stores by the end of this year and intends to open one location a month beginning in 1997. Target areas include southern California, other western states, and the islands, Miller said. While there are still some franchise locations in the region, the company hopes to include new centers in its corporate community.

A family affair

With more of a focus on family entertainment, Q-ZAR West is looking to develop new centers that will include everything from fast food, snack bars, and cafes to ride simulators and virtual reality games.

"Two years ago you might have had a smattering of games and one birthday party room," according to Miller. But the company's most recent addition in Chico includes a full-scale pizza restaurant, which the company bought and incorporated into its facility. Other features of the new 16,000-square-foot facility include a DDS satellite system to facilitate the broadcast of professional sporting events, two large screen televisions, a corporate meeting room, and a wide array of top quality videos selected at ACME '96.

With the creation of its games division, the company brought on board a veteran coin machine operator, Ed Singley, to oversee coin-op games for its locations. He works full time overseeing and servicing games in the Bay area. "As we open new stores (in non-local areas) one of the priorities is to find skilled technicians," noted Miller in discussing the company's decision to own and maintain its own games. "You get tired of 50/50 splits and the quality of the games not being what you wanted. The decision has already paid dividends."

It was a natural move, according to Miller, because there are so many similarities in the coin machine and laser tag industries. "You need to keep up with the times," he explained. "Consumers are so educated. High tech is more than just a phrase. The same goes for laser tag. We constantly upgrade our software. If you don't you're going to fall behind."

But there are some challenges to the coin-op side of a laser tag facility as well. "There's a certain stigma to being called an arcade," said Miller. "You have to kind of tow the line. We know the games can be big earners; we know they go hand in hand. But you have to be careful how you market and exhibit the games. When people walk in the front door they can't see the laser tag arena. They can see the games."

Miller stresses that every guest is greeted and all games and attractions are displayed in keeping with the overall theme of a high-tech entertainment center for the family

More good things appear to be around the corner on the games front for Q-ZAR West. While Miller was a bit shy on details, he hinted at a potential joint venture with a "major entertainment company" for exclusive game distribution. "We suggested doing it in one store and they said `let's do it in 20,'" he said. "They want to tie in with an industry leader and so do we."

What about redemption?

"That is the next step," Miller said. "There is not a person in this organization who doesn't recognize the importance of redemption."

Q-ZAR West plans to include redemption in new locations and intends to retrofit some of its existing locations by the end of this year. But this is not the company's first foray into the world of tickets and prizes.

The company first experimented with redemption by contracting with an operator on a 50/50 split, but the level of service made it unprofitable. Miller said problems occurred when regular maintenance and service could not be handled by employees on site. The operator had to make a service call for even the most minor problems.

"Ticket jams occur commonly but if you don't have the keys to the games you can't fix them," he said. "You need to have total control of your redemption operation to be successful."

While some of the redemption op-

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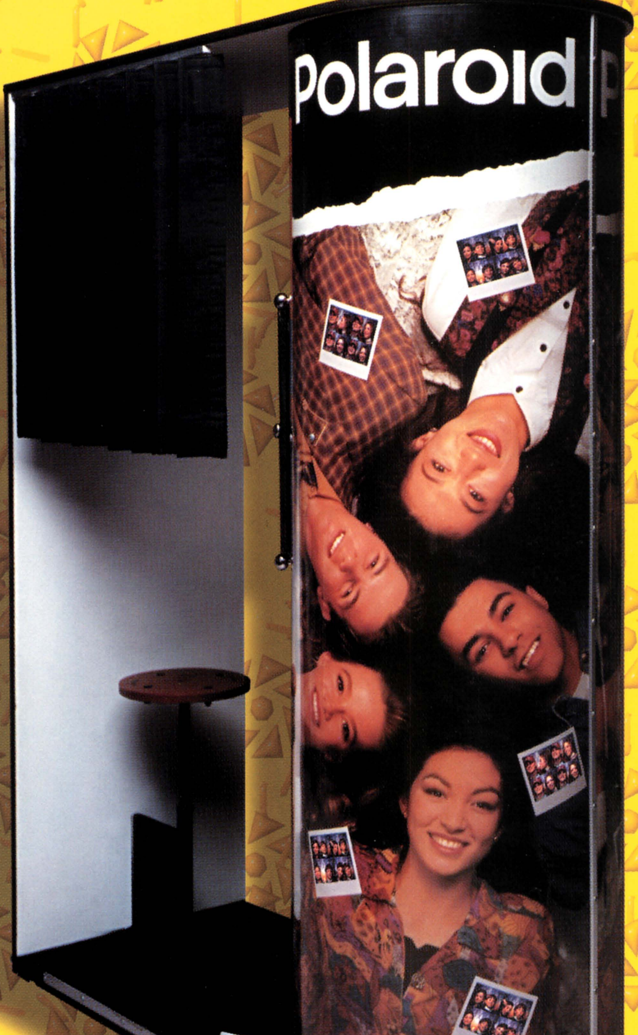

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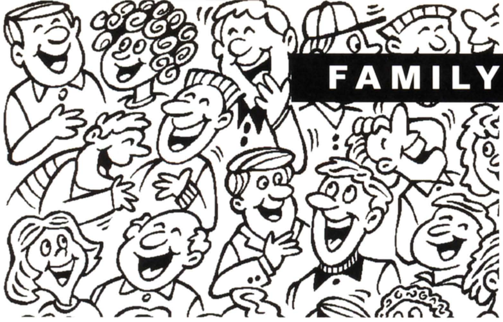


"You need to have total control of your redemption operation to be successful."

erations will be handled through the corporate structure, individual locations will play a major role in running their own games and redemption counters, Miller added.

Tag team

So the question remains: Is laser tag profitable in a family fun center, particularly a family fun center that started out as a laser tag facility?

Miller answers with a resounding, "Yes!" And the introduction of the company's new iQ system will further strengthen its place in the market, he asserted.

The new system is designed to link the player and the game, thus providing a total interactive experience. The newly designed equipment is teamed with an arena powered by a Pentium based computer system, and all players are tracked by a new technology that recognizes the player's presence in the game and continually downloads their activity to the central computer.

"It's like playing a whole new game," Miller said. "The more you play the more options that are open to you."

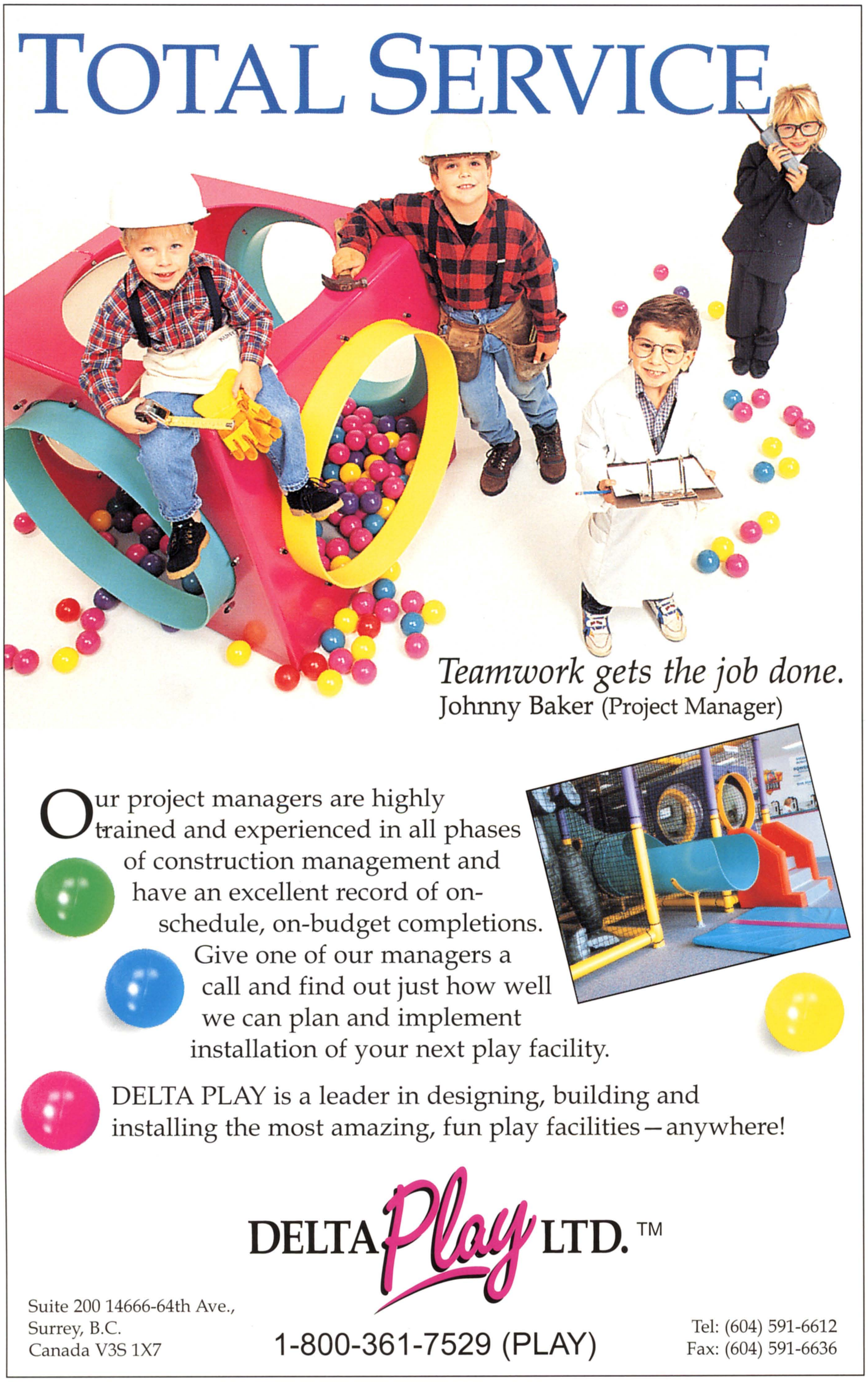
Another catalyst for growth is corporate business. Miller said that a good number of the Silicon Valley computer firms in the area use Q-ZAR facilities for motivational sessions.

"It's such a good team-building experience, and we have a whole package to tie that into laser tag," he explained. "You see CEOs getting chased after by mail clerks. You get into the laser tag arena and it's open season on the big cheese. Obviously we have a large teenage player base, but our corporate business in California is outstanding."

Laser tag also offers opportunities for parents and children to compete against each other in a birthday party setting and can be linked to local businesses through cross promotion, according to Miller.

Additionally, not unlike the traditional coin machine business, profits can be increased through marketing member nights that feature game options not usually available to the general public and setting up leagues for proficient players to compete against one another.

For more information on Q-ZAR West, contact Miller at (510) 837-0502; fax (510) 837-6748. ▲



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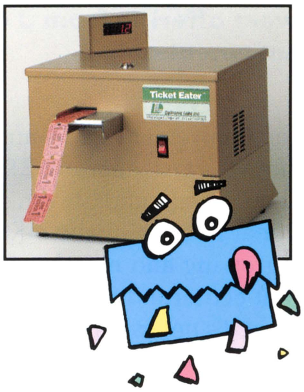

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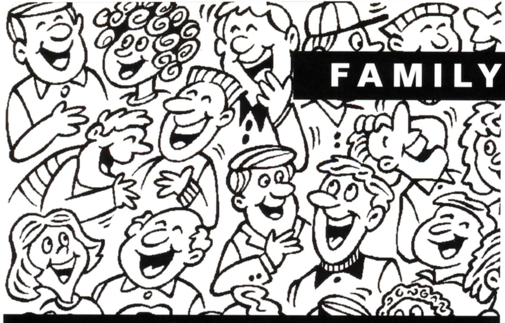
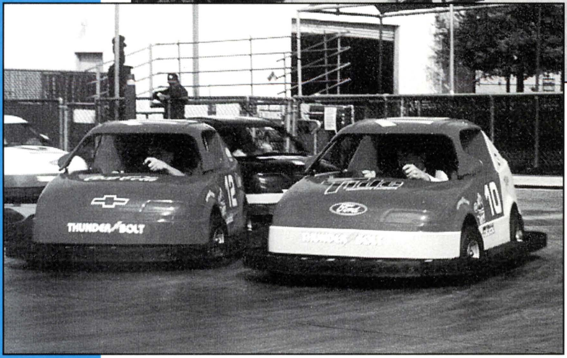


FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

by Steve White

Go-karts pay off with hard work and innovation

Once a cottage industry populated by a handful of manufacturing companies, the go-kart business is now booming with record growth over the past several years.



Above: Formula K Raceway's location includes three go-kart tracks and two kiddie tracks.

Left: The Thunderbolt is the newest offering from J & J Amusements

Last year's International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Convention and Trade Show in New Orleans saw 29 companies exhibiting go-karts and related equipment, and Steven Hix, who is executive director of the International Recreational Go-Kart Association says go-karts are one of the "fastest growing and most profitable attractions in the booming family entertainment center industry."

But Hix and other industry veterans stress that it's not as simple as building a track, buying a few karts, and counting the profits. A number of issues must be taken into consideration, including the style and number of cars, whether they

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are designed for children or adults or both, the length and design of the track, the track construction material, security and safety features, and marketing and pricing strategies.

There are a wide variety of cars on the market for both one and two riders of all ages, and styles encompass a wide spectrum of themes and design. Hix explains: "The range of styles of concession go-karts includes: the traditional `Open Frame' style go-kart; the `Indy' style bodied car with a partially enclosed driver's compartment; the 'Mini-Outlaw Sprint' style; the 'Formula One' style with a completely enclosed driver's compartment; and the relatively new 'Mini-Funny Car' or 'Mini-Dragster' style."

So what does it cost to get into the go-kart business, and how much will it bring in return? While there are many differing opinions on the type of equipment and operations needed to run a successful go-kart track, a general consensus on front-end costs is approximately $250,000.

For instance, FKL Kartworld of Kissimmee, Fla., which sells 12 different models of go-karts, suggests a one year proposal for a one-half mile track that includes capital costs of $234,500 and operating costs of $131,000. With gross revenue estimated by the company at $280,000 for a 20-kart operation, the operator should net $149,000 in the first year in the form of return on investment.

"It is our experience that a $14,000 income per kart average is an easily attainable standard," FKL literature predicts. Income figures are adjusted downward to $10,000 per kart for a quarter mile track, 15-kart operation; capital costs come in at $139,000 and operations require $86,000.

Capital costs for the longer track, according to FKL, include the karts, paving costs of approximately $62,000, as well as a garage, bridge, guardrail, lighting, fencing, and assorted other equipment. FKL says a typical track can accommodate one kart for every 75 feet in length and should be 20 to 25 feet wide.

There are a number of other options to consider including whether to use asphalt or concrete and whether to use a guardrail or steel band connected to tires to keep karts on the track. However, it is important to make sure the kart wheelguards match the height of the steel band. FKL recommends using the six-inch Driscopipe polyethyelene guardrail in a double stacked format.

FKL sells 12 different versions of karts that run the gamut from the open body Lynx with a pro-racing car look ($3,495 per kart) to the VW Kiddie Bug for children ages four to 10 ($1,450).

Valvoline
6
BILSTEIN
Valvoline
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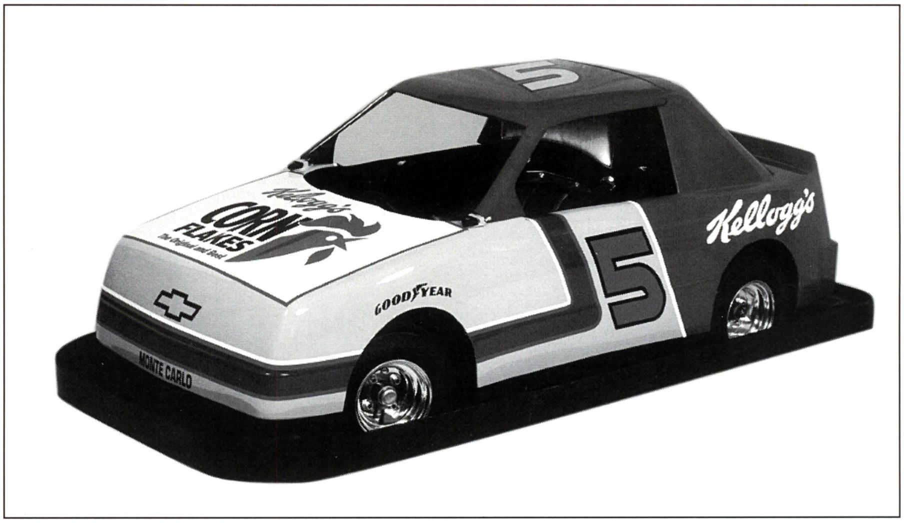
FKL's high-end Lynx go-kart.



Formula K Raceway's Nazkart.

ADULT EDUCATION

Another go-kart manufacturer that has some distinct ideas about how to operate its product is Formula K Raceway. In addition to manufacturing go-karts, the company operates an FEC adjacent to its plant in Mattawan, Mich. One point that has to be stressed, said Formula K's John Stephani, is that go-karting is not just for children.

"As a manufacturer and operator, we have felt as if we were missing a large portion of the population because of this misconception," he said.

“One point that has to be stressed is that go-karting is not just for children.”

“Most go-karts are fun for all ages, however, many adults find it more entertaining to be able to ride cars only with other adults. Adults also seem to want to have more of the feeling of professional racing, like they get in Grand Prix Cars and Nazkarts.”

This trend prompted Formula K to begin building larger and faster karts suited for older drivers with features like fully enclosed bodies. This allows family entertainment centers to capitalize on this market, according to FKL, which put the theory into practice at its own location.

Formula K’s park opened in 1975 with an adult Grand Prix track and a kiddie track; it now includes an additional kiddie track, an adult tri-oval concrete track featuring Nazkarts and Outlaw Sprinters, and a 1,000-foot asphalt track for riders ages 10 and up. The tracks employ a spring steel guardrail system.

Both the Grand Prix and the tri-oval track are for riders 16 and over. “These two tracks have opened up a whole new marketing strategy as we are not just for kids anymore,” reiterated location manager Becki Layman. Riders pay $3.50 for a five-minute ride.

Focusing on the adult market at its own FEC as well as other locations also changes the way go-kart operations are set up, Stephani said. “A standard go-kart track generally will not work for Nazkarts or Sprint cars,” he explained. “The tracks must now be larger, wider, and constructed with a better and stronger rail system. The importance of a properly designed track that matches the kart with a compatible containment system is even more important now that the karts are bigger, faster, and heavier with older, more aggressive drivers.”

Formula K designs tracks to fit in a given area for customers and designs rail systems that are compatible with the specific car being used. The company also provides remote control safety systems that can turn individual karts down to an idle, shut down all the cars at one time, or have them coast to the pits automatically when connected to a timing system.

While approximately half of FKL’s location revenue is generated by go-karts, it also includes an arcade, bumper boats, kiddie bumper boats, a softplay area, batting cages, and miniature golf.

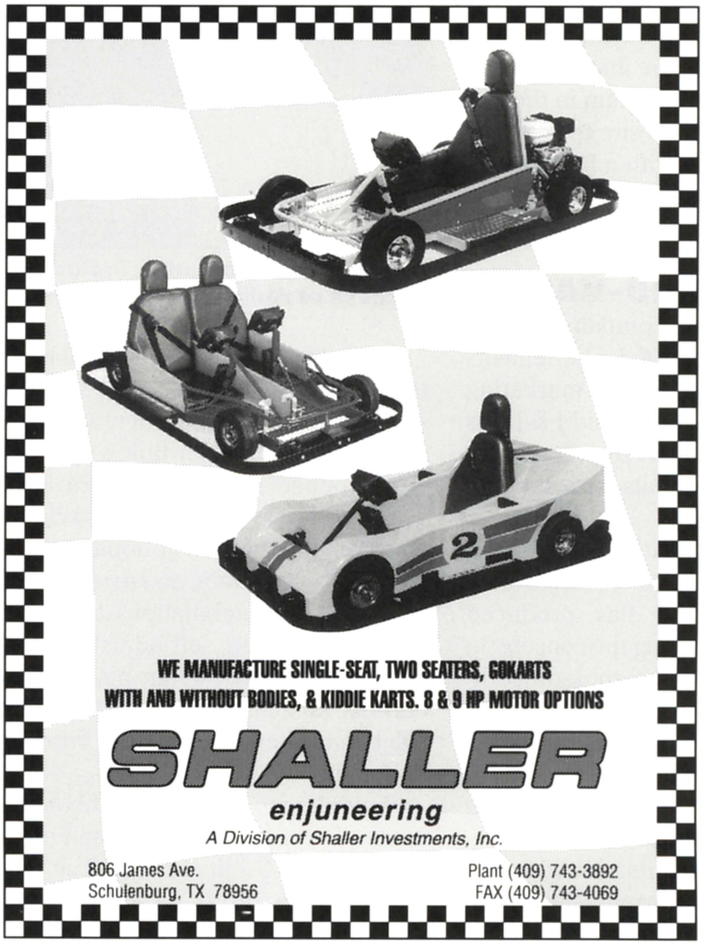
A 1995 renovation saw the addition of 4,000 square feet to the facility’s arcade for a total of 7,500 square feet, three birthday party rooms, and an improved redemption counter.

“We chose a racing theme for the arcade due to the increasing popularity of NASCAR racing,” said Layman. “The unique decor includes NASCAR collectibles, licensed NASCAR merchandise, drivers’ photos, race banners and flags, and memorabilia. The focal point is a full-size late model stock car hanging from the ceiling.”

There are also numerous race car parts hanging on the walls from the two limited late model stock cars that we sponsor. FKL also installed a 60-inch big screen television used to broadcast live racing and other various sporting events as well as race oriented videos.

“Racing is a hot ticket; ours is probably the only arcade like this,” added company president Richard Sexton.

Formula K owns its own redemption games, but uses an outside operator for the arcade’s video games, with the exception of *Daytona USA* driving simulators. There are 60 games in the arcade with redemption making up just under half of that. “Although our



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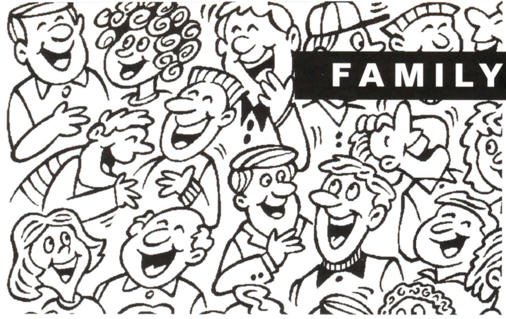


video games outnumber redemption pieces, redemption out-grosses video nearly two to one,” said Layman. “This year we’ve added two new redemption pieces, a children’s basketball game and a Smart ticket redemption center.”

FKL offers two models of single seat go-karts, two seaters, kiddy karts, Nazkarts, Sprint Karts, Grand Prix karts, and its newest model, Super Trucks. All of the karts can be painted to match nationally sponsored race cars seen on television.

Stephani said that while the past eight to 10 years have seen phenomenal growth domestically, some major areas may be reaching a saturation point. “The newest market for go-karts seems to be overseas, especially Southeast Asia,” he said. “This was virtually an untapped market until just a few years ago. Now the biggest challenge is to inform the foreign buyers that safety and quality are more important than just price. Another problem in the foreign market is their desire to go faster than is reasonable with a barrier system that will not safely retain the car on the track.”

A racing theme runs throughout the Formula K Raceway arcade.

A fully stocked counter, including racing themed items, reflects the success of redemption at Formula K Raceway.

GOLF AND GO-KARTS

Another go-kart company with its roots in operating is J & J Amusements of Salem, Ore. Sales and marketing manager Marvin Foster said J & J was founded in the 1970s to procure go-karts and bumper boats for a chain of family fun centers.

When J & J began its manufacturing operations, the company started with bumper boats and has produced 8,000 since developing the concept. In September 1993, J & J took on additional partners and moved to new Salem headquarters where go-karts were being manufactured by one of the partners, Automated Batting Cages. By April of this year, the company had outgrown its second home and moved into its current Salem facility of 50,000 square feet.

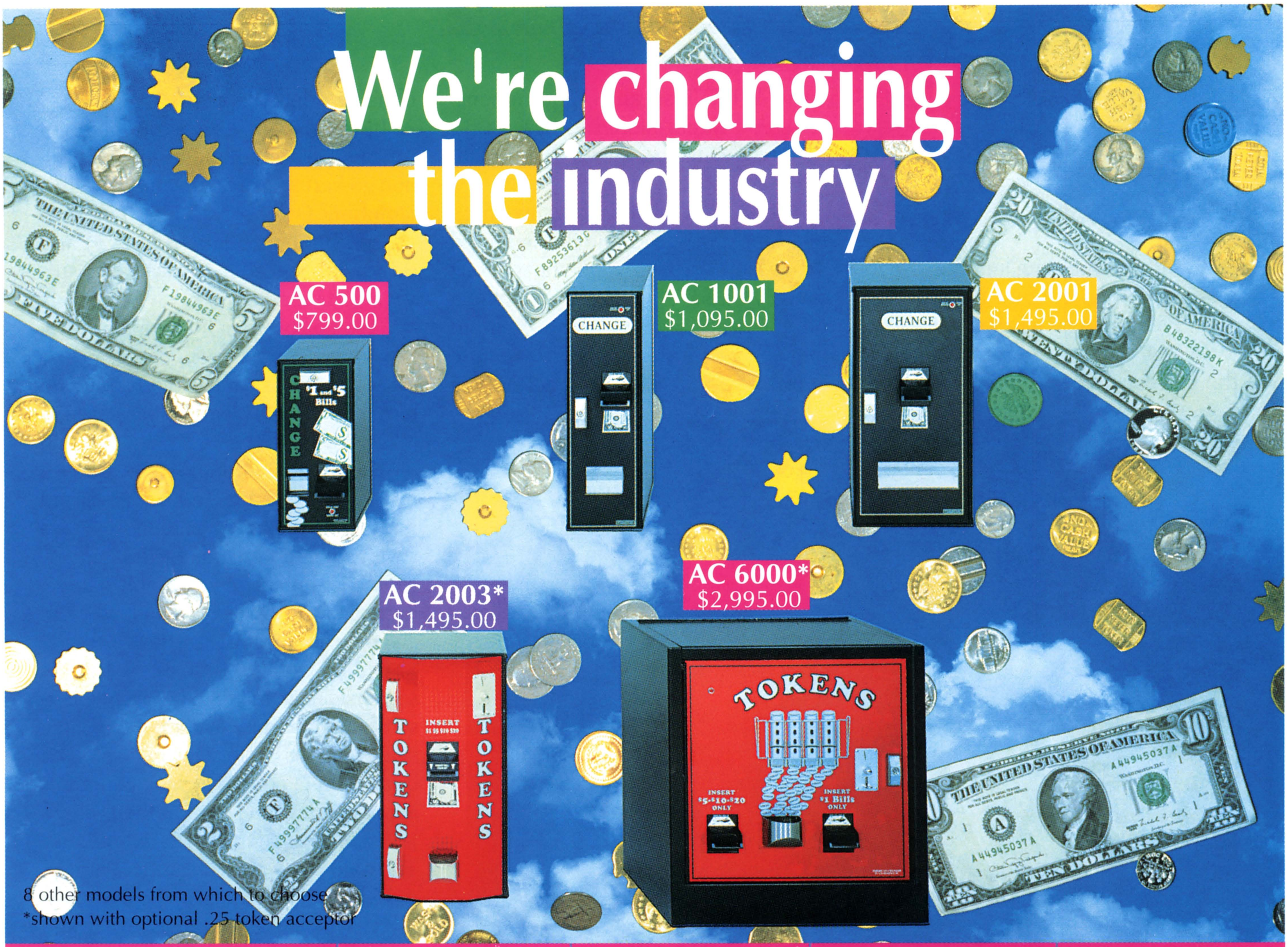
This spring J & J added several karts to its extensive line including Viper, a single seat kart; Sidewinder, a double seat kart; and Thunder Bolt, a two-seat Targa-topped stock car replica kart. The karts are available with two choices of engines, other optional equipment and accessories, and 40 standard gel-coat color combinations. Standard features include self-adjusting hydraulic disc brakes, a four-point safety harness, and chassis mounted roll bar. J & J also offers spring steel bumper rails and optional brake lights.

According to J & J, a track should be made of concrete if possible and measure 800-1,200 linear feet. The recommended width is 24-25 feet, and maximum speeds should not exceed 20 mph. Two to five attendants will be needed, depending on the number of karts, the company said.

J & J’s manufacturing operation may have grown over the year, but the company has not lost touch with the needs of operators, says loyal customer Dave Owens, who manages the Golfin’ Dolphin in Cape Carteret on the North Carolina coast.

Most impressive to Owens is J & J’s $8,000 Fly-by-Wire safety system, which can slow karts to a crawl when there is a problem on the track. Wires are strung every 20 feet, and when activated the system slows the cars as they cross under.

“It should be mandatory for all go-kart operations,” he said. “We work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Optional Capacity	1,000 quarters / tokens	2,800 quarters / tokens	5,6000 quarters / tokens	-
Payouts	hopper loaded quarter or token	hopper loaded, quarter nickel, dime or token	dual hopper optional .25 token acceptor	dual hopper optional .25 token acceptor
$1 Coin Payout	yes with a kit	yes	yes	yes
Validator Acceptance	$1,$2,$5, $10	$1, $2,$5,$10,$20	$1, $2, $5, $10, $20	$1, $2, $5, $10, $20
Validator Interchangeability	no	yes	yes	no
Token Bonus Payout	no	yes	128 options	128 options
Base and Header Kits	yes	yes	yes	base only
*Rear Loaders	no	yes	yes	no
Options Fronts	no	change or tokens	change or tokens	change or tokens
Optional Alarm System	yes	yes	yes	yes

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real well with the state and the inspector said we had the best track he had seen. We've had no injuries so far."

In fact, Owens said safety is one of the biggest concerns in operating go-karts. While insurance requirements state that riders should be at least 54 inches, Owens has raised that threshold to 58 inches.

"I bring out my kids, because that's what most of the employees are, and drill them on safety on the go-kart track," he said. "And then you put them on the track and monitor them to make sure they stay by the remote control, check riders for alcohol, and don't let riders bang the karts."

It's necessary to take these kind of precautions when operating a $2 million go-kart track like the one at Golfin' Dolphin. Owens said he first purchased bumper boats from J & J and decided to invest in go-karts after surveying the marketplace.

"We go to other locations and we saw they were real money makers," he said. "Each year we try to do a big project, but this one was so large we're taking a year off."

The 30-acre location also features a driving range with 30 covered tees and 50 grass tees, an ABC batting cage with seven stalls, an arcade, birthday party room, 18-hole miniature golf course, bumper boats by J & J, and an all-grass chipping area and putting green.

Golfin' Dolphin utilizes J & J's two-seater sidekick model because one person can drive a two-seater but the opposite is not possible, Owens said. The quarter mile concrete track generates approximately one third of the facility's revenue and requires six attendants. The road course track features a bridge, as well as an underpass and overpass.

"We have not seen much wear and tear; we didn't spare a dime on the track and it pays off," Owens explained. "We had to build a bridge to such rigid specifications, we had to drive a bulldozer over it."

The facility uses a guardrail system connected to tires. "If you drive into the steel rail, the tires will absorb it and the rail will spring back," Owens said.

While some facilities have gone to special pricing, including unlimited rides on certain days for one price, Owens said that wouldn't work at his location. Rides cost $5 per rider and $3 per passenger for five minutes. "We are right by a military base and all I need is 20 Marines coming out here and descending on the go-kart track all day," he explained.

Thus, Owens' experience, as well as that of Formula K Raceway and others, bears out the current wisdom in today's marketplace that while go-karts are a significant investment they can be profitable in an FEC under the supervision of innovative and hard-working operators. ▲

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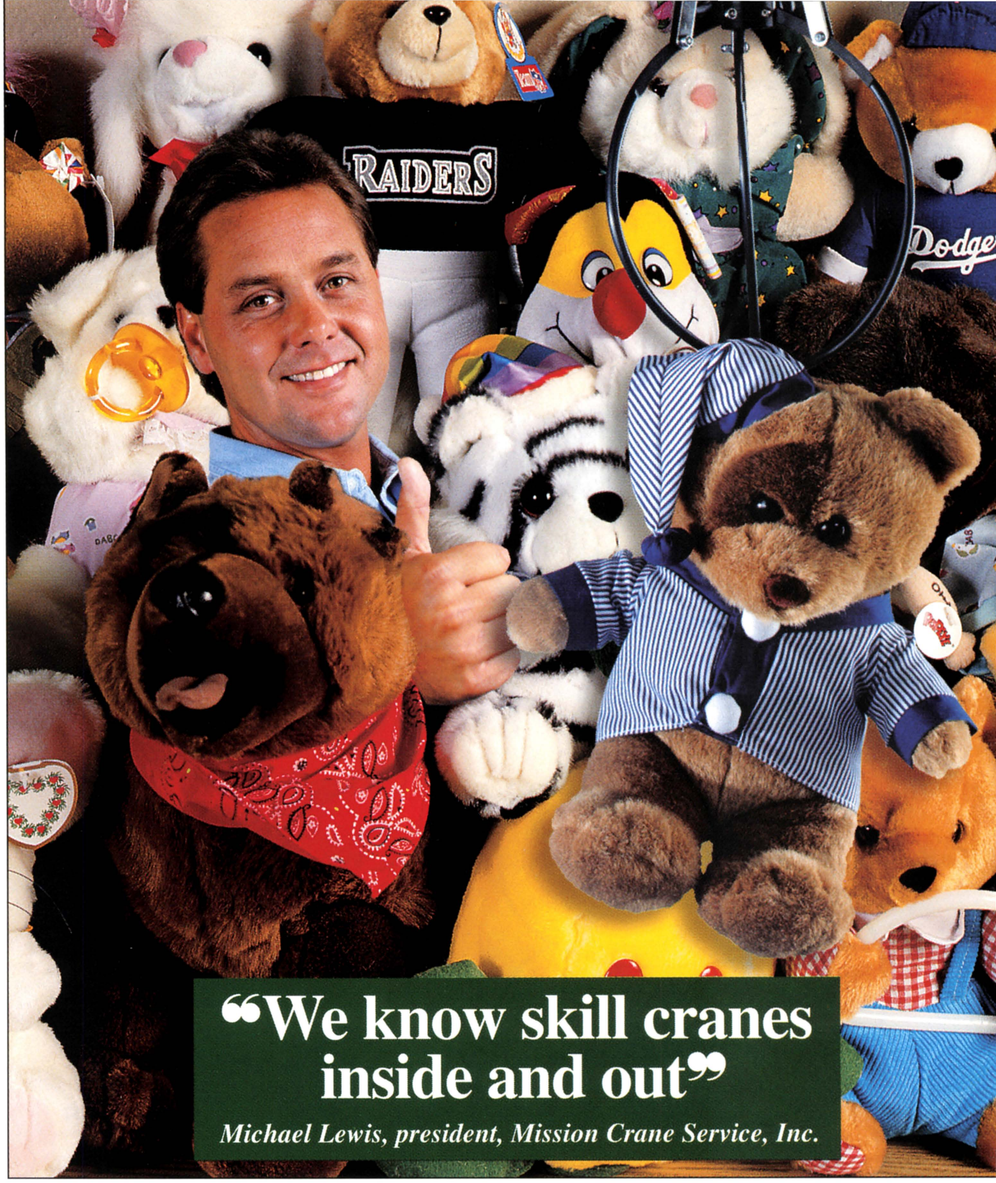

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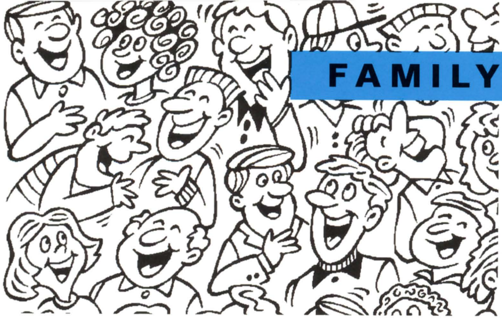
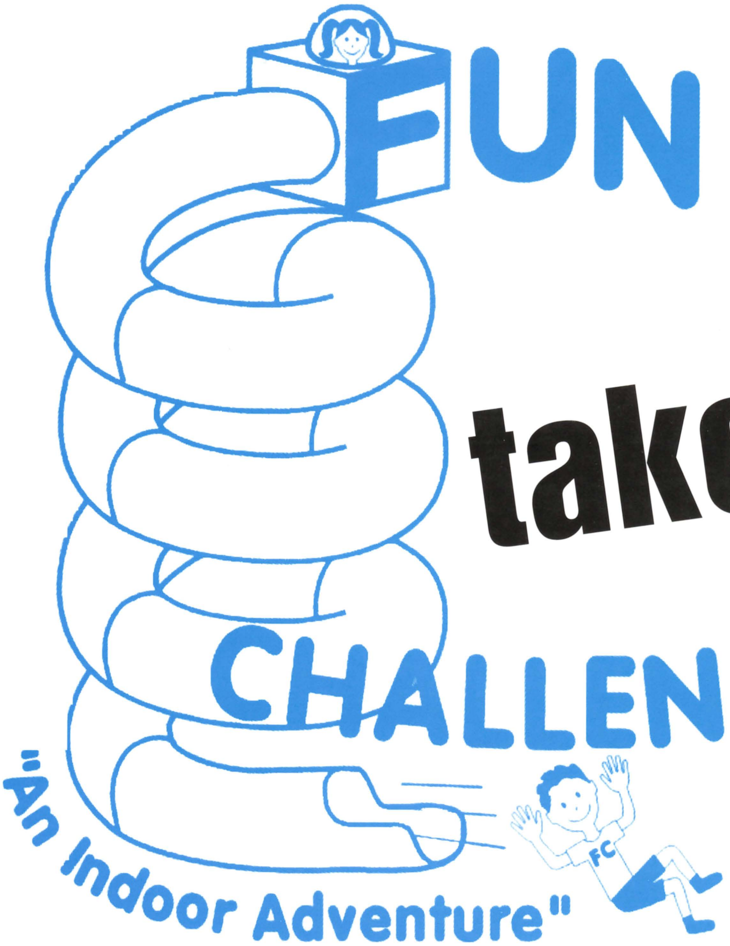


FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

by Bonnie Theard



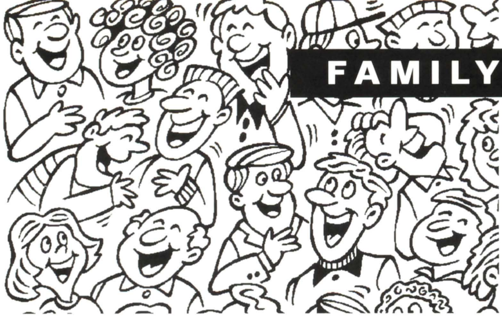
takes the lead

> ***The goal: To create a place that is fun for kids but accommodating to adults.***
>
> ***The area: A small community near a major city in the Southeast.***
>
> ***The answer: Fun Challenge***

Chuck and Jane Jones are a typical mid-America couple who dreamed of establishing a family business one day. That day came May 3 when they celebrated the grand opening of their 20,000-square-foot Fun Challenge family entertainment center on Arbor Drive in Christiansburg, Va.

Fun Challenge is not your usual "mom and pop" operation. Grandparents and other relatives joined in to help bring the dream to reality, from Jane's dad Bill Matthews, a Virginia real estate developer, to Chuck's mother Loretta Jones, a foodservice professional from Donora, Pa. The road to the final destination was both fun and challenging.

Chuck knows what challenges are all about. He played college football at the University of Pittsburgh and one season as a middle linebacker with the Dallas Cowboys before an injury cut his professional career short. It was time for a change of direction, which led to graduate school and then coaching positions at James Madison University, Rutgers University, Tulane University, and his alma mater in Pittsburgh.



Parents and children have a fun time.

Toddlers have their own space at Fun Challenge.

All the while that entrepreneurial spirit was there. A turning point came in 1992 when his wife Jane went to Christiansburg to help her dad recover from an illness. With their young children Morgan and Mallory along, she looked for appropriate entertainment and discovered it was a rare commodity.

Chuck explained: "Choices are limited for families in smaller towns. It's not like a major city where the choices are totally unlimited. Other than a few fast food restaurants, the next option was 45 minutes away in Roanoke. She could see the area needed some type of fun center."

Fortunately for Chuck and Jane they had access to two acres of land and a steel building in a newly developing area. They started researching the viability of the project that was now taking shape in their minds.

While Christiansburg itself has a population of 12,000, nearby Blacksburg swells from about 12,000 to 40,000 when Virginia Tech is in session. Combine those figures with a number of surrounding small communities and there was a potential of around 65,000 people within a 20-mile radius. They checked the 1990 Census figures and followed the projections for population growth (four percent). This information was free.

Gathering demographic information started in November 1992 and by October 1993 they had a good package put together, including financing for the project. They attended Fun Expo in Nashville that year and continued the education process.

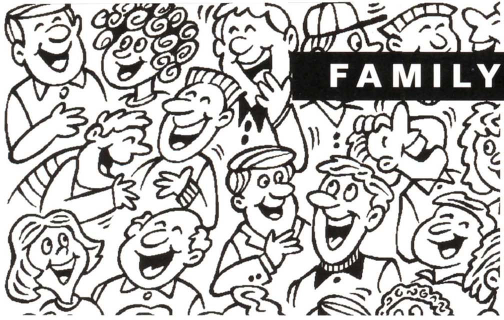
A preliminary opening March 11 indicated that all their long hours of planning and preparation were producing results.

Here's what you find at Fun Challenge:

• A modular play structure (1,500 square feet) by Soft Play of Charlotte, N.C., that is dominated by a double 16-1/2' spiral slide (only one of three like it on the eastern seaboard). Included are a large ball pit, fun forest, club house, crawl tubes, air bounce, rope walk, and more.

Mallory Jones (c) celebrates her third birthday on April 1 in one of the party rooms.

Customers check out prizes at the redemption counter.



Prizes are displayed above a bank of redemption games.

The 100-seat foodservice area allows viewing of the play structure.

- Four colorful birthday party rooms. Party packages include 90 minutes of private party time and unlimited time on the play structure.
- Game room (17'x 40') with pinballs, sit-down drivers, upright videos, and air hockey.
- Redemption game area with alley bowlers, basketball game, and novelty pieces.
- Redemption counter (10' x 14') filled with plush, soft sports balls, telephones, home system games, yo-yos, headphones and cassette players, and much more.
- Foodservice area that seats 100 and offers a menu of Perky's Pizza, hot dogs, chicken nuggets, salads, nachos, popcorn, and hand-dipped ice cream. A half-wall separates it from the play structure but allows clear viewing.
- Toddler play area (1,000 square feet) with games and kiddie rides.
- Parent's lounge complete with a pool table.
- Multipurpose room for weekday group meetings (sports teams, clubs); doubles as birthday party headquarters on weekends.
- Once Upon a Child retail children's clothing store.
- Storage area (2,000 square feet) destined to become a laser tag arena.
- Balcony for receptions or additional birthday parties.
- Office space for those much needed away-from-view tasks.

Location value

"People ask, 'How important is location?'" said Chuck. "From my office window I can see several new discount stores, restaurants, and the 125-store Marketplace Mall. We are in a location where everything is developing in our direction. People come from as far away as 60 miles to shop because of the new stores. Traffic is so bad in Roanoke that people prefer to take the longer trip here for the same quality shopping."

The right location is only part of the equation. Opening an FEC is a major undertaking. The creative input and physical labor of family members helped save funds in the development process and building stage. Chuck and Jane created their own operations program and employee manual (employees are called "play leaders"). They also chose the color scheme of hot pink, teal blue, white, purple, and black, but enlisted the assistance of a local college student to design the logo.

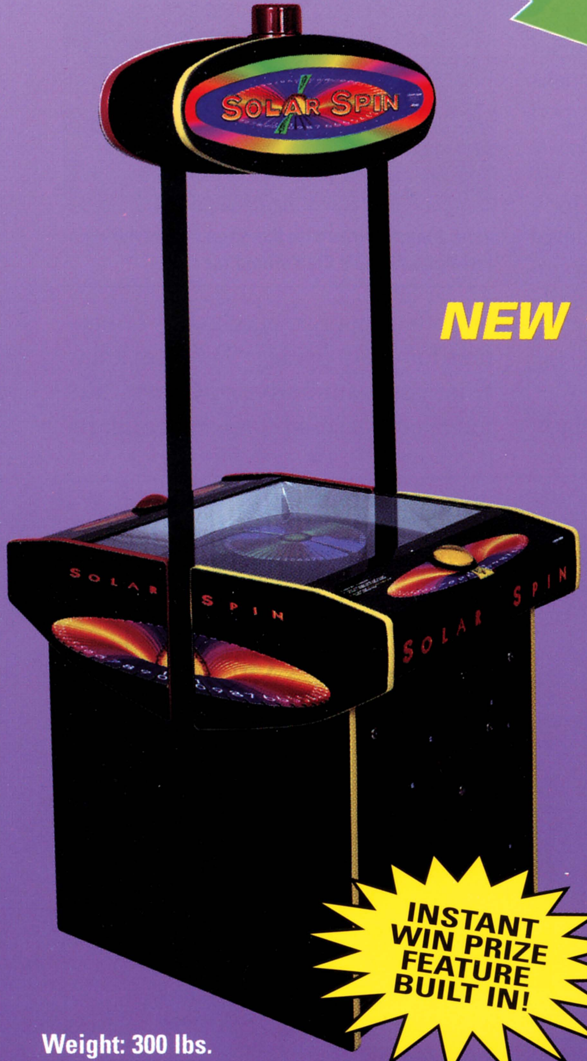
"By all means investigate your local colleges," remarked Chuck. "It's much less expensive. Plus, it gave me an opportunity to learn the graphics package the designer used. I have been able to manipulate the logo in a number of different ways to use on flyers, tokens, and our shirts."

Before the opening, he established Fun Challenge as a good business neighbor by attending meetings of local high school students involved in a coalition to prevent drug and alcohol abuse. "We hired a lot of good students we met," he added. "We volunteered to help chaperone the post-prom party at the mall. We could see there was a need for a place for teens to go on Saturday nights and set up our Teen Night with a local DJ who also does karaoke. We welcome parents to Teen Night with open arms.

"A lot of people think this is a fly-by-night business, that we will separate people from their money and that's it. We took the initiative to go out and make some inroads in the community. We legitimized ourselves before we opened."

This step of telling the story of who they were and what they provide was augmented by press releases to local media announcing the impending opening. "Word of

SOLAR SPIN



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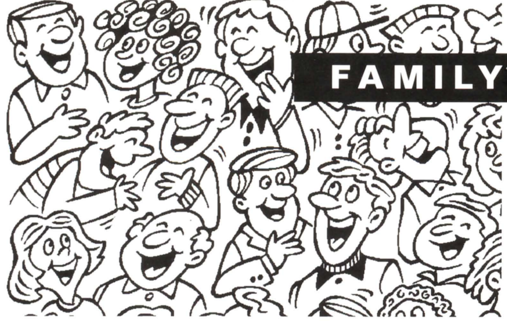
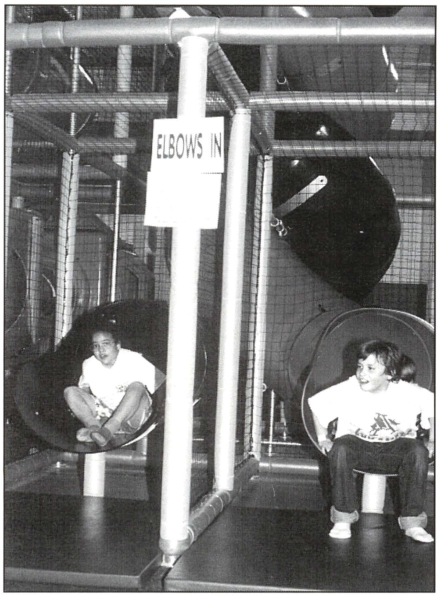




The double spiral slide rises 16-1/2' high.

mouth advertising started from the teen involvement. As long as two years in advance people knew we were coming, and that has helped us a lot. The local press recognized the need for recreation facilities."

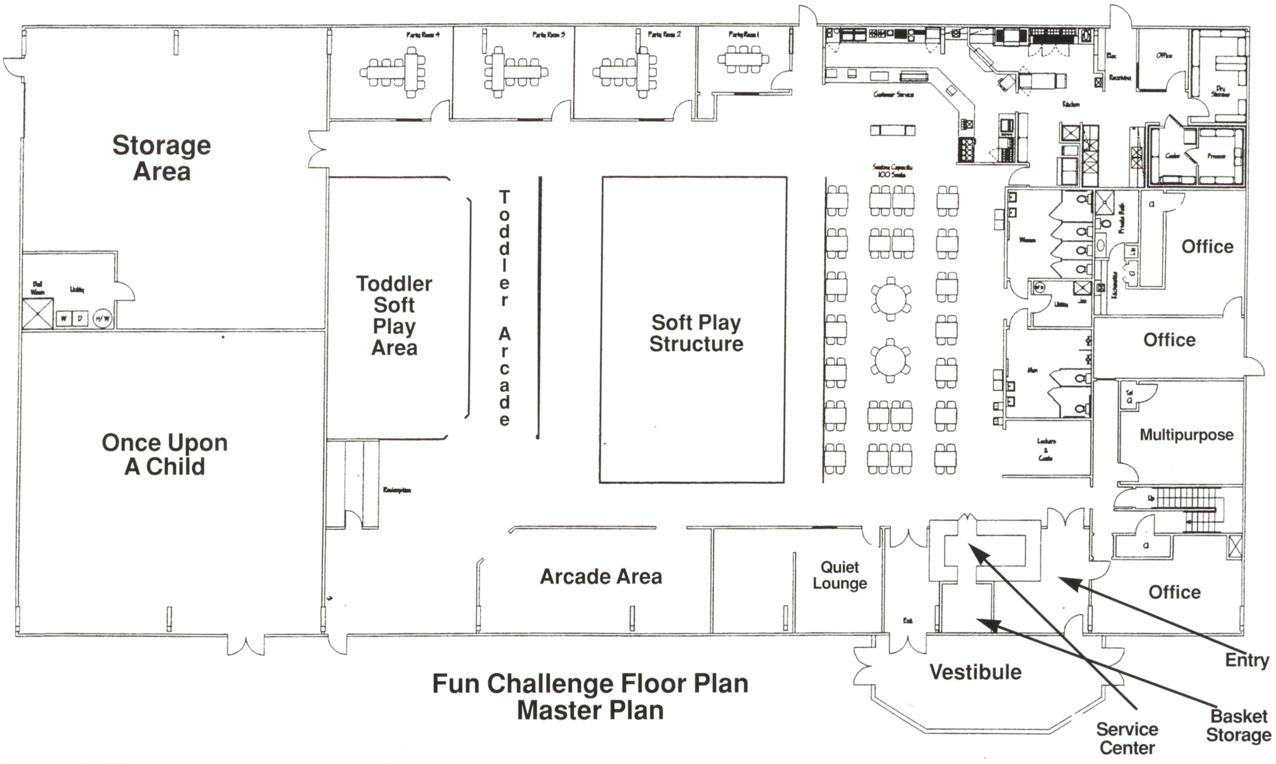
Practical tips

Noise control is important. Noted Chuck, "We blew on white cellulose insulation that has good acoustic quality. Parents are commenting that they don't leave with a pounding headache. They also are commenting on the soft play structure being the center of activity. They can walk around it and under it and see their children playing."

Chuck recommends looped carpet instead of cut pile. "Cut pile and socks don't mix," he said. "However, looped carpet cannot be repaired if you get a runner in it. We didn't want rubber tile because it is hard and doesn't look good after a while. We do have quarry tile in the kitchen, bathrooms, and entry." Party rooms have white vinyl tile with a black border and hints of the other colors in the facility. Dividers between party rooms are gray.

Vendors, such as beverage suppliers, often supply menu boards or banners for your opening. "Let them know what you want," advised Chuck. "Remember that some companies offer re-

Jane Jones dances with the Kroger robot during a Fox Network Kid's Club promotion.



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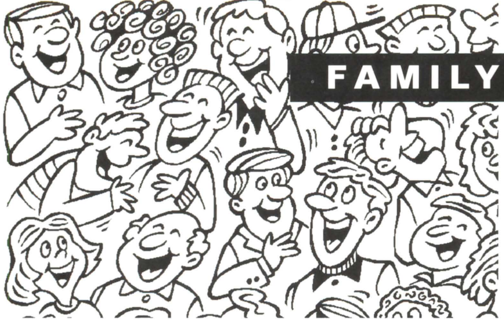
Service Center

Fun Challenge Floor Plan
Master Plan



Developing an FEC from the ground up

1. Determine the degree of need for your business.

2. Develop a name for your business that is catchy but easily describes your business as fun.

3. Identify a location for your business that is accessible, visible, and expandable.

4. Identify who you primarily want to serve (target audience) by age.

5. Identify the area(s) that you want to serve—target market (primary and secondary).

a. Consider primary (20 minutes away) and secondary (up to 50 minutes away) by time, not necessarily distance.

b. Consider access barriers such as geographic, social, and psychological.

6. Identify competition in both primary and secondary markets and consider what you intend to offer vs. what they don't, can't, or won't offer.

7. When doing your own demographic study, start with the primary area's chamber of commerce, then contact chambers in your secondary areas. Don't stress secondary markets too heavily in your business plan. Contact your highway department, they have traffic counts for all major intersections in the state.

8. Research how to put together your business plan by using "Score" seminars and available books for the proper format, methods, and style.

9. Be sure to utilize existing FECs as references for determining operations costs and pro forma projection percentages. Be conservative and realistic; also, know your numbers and know them well.

10. Be as specific as possible with demographic numbers, financial projections, and cost estimates. Learn them and understand them for presentation.

11. Identify area banks that may have supported successful ventures such as yours in the past, as well as other investors for start-up capital. Be prepared to be turned down. Identify at least five banks or private investors to present your package to. Also, be prepared to go the Small Business Administration route; it may be the only way to receive the loan.

12. Be prepared to sell your whole package. Develop your own canned sales pitch for each aspect of your business. Be truthful, sincere, enthusiastic, and realistic. Remember to sell the future of your business.

13. While contacting multiple vendors to supply your facility (face to face) practice selling your whole package (except actual financial numbers). This allows them to understand the scope of your project as well as sharpens your skills of presentation without pressure.

14. When choosing any vendor, remember that service after the sale is crucial!

15. Utilize local high school or college art students to inexpensively develop your logo and identification program as a contest, class project, or individually. This works well when you have a good concept of what you want. Be willing to listen to suggestions.

16. Develop a strategy to utilize free advertising methods early and often. For example, early press releases at zoning approval etc., word of mouth, flyers, and a temporary site sign.

17. Get involved with local community service associations to access local issues with respect to recreation, youth problems and needs, and to establish your real concern for local youth. Remember 14- to 15-year-olds when hiring; they need the opportunity and are enthusiastic.

18. When building from the ground up, develop your floor plan with efficiency, comfort, storage, and accessibility in mind in addition to revenue per square foot.

19. Be flexible with changes from original dimensions and find an architect and contractor who will do the same and do what is best in the field. A lot of ideas look great on paper, but...be prepared and willing to modify.

20. Communicate with your contractor daily and be sure to be present when critical areas are planned or built. Do not allow the contractor to interpret your needs.

21. Professionals don't have all of the answers, especially when it comes to what an FEC is supposed to look like. Trust your instincts and your research. Your ideas are often just as good and less costly.

22. Develop general time schedules for construction, receiving shipments, installation of equipment, advertising, hiring, training, and opening.

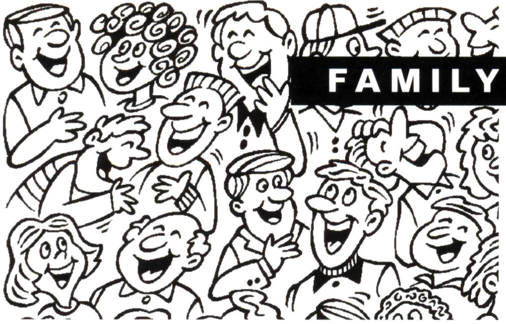
23. Consider a soft opening to get operational procedures worked out, with a grand opening sponsored by your local chamber of commerce 30 to 45 days later.

24. There are literally a million little details that are not addressed.

25. Would we do it again? Yes! And we are considering franchising Fun Challenge in the very near future.

P.S. Make sure you get lots of rest before you open.

(This project has been a two-and-a-half-year challenge to put together. My wife and I would like to thank Bonnie Theard of Play Meter for giving us a vote of confidence two years ago at the first Fun Expo we attended.)



bates if you buy a large quantity of product from them. Explore every chance to save."

Jane pointed out other details: "One thing we planned for is storage space and out-of-sight work space—it's something you cannot overlook. When you plan a game room you really have to see the equipment to place it more effectively. Be sure to allow ample space for the games. Put the redemption counter in a highly visible place. At Fun Challenge it's one of the first things you see."

Fun Challenge has a unique arrangement for its games. Chuck and Jane work with a local operating company, Shenandoah Amusement of Roanoke, and distributor State Sales and Service in Baltimore, Md. Although Shenandoah has been in business for 47 years, the company was not in redemption before Fun Challenge. Now Shenandoah has expanded its business with redemption in some of its other locations.

Redemption manager Tim Matthews has found that prizes requiring 100 to 400 tickets are moving the fastest. Some of the most successful items have been inflatables, whoopie cushions, flying fists, mini basketballs, and folding fans.

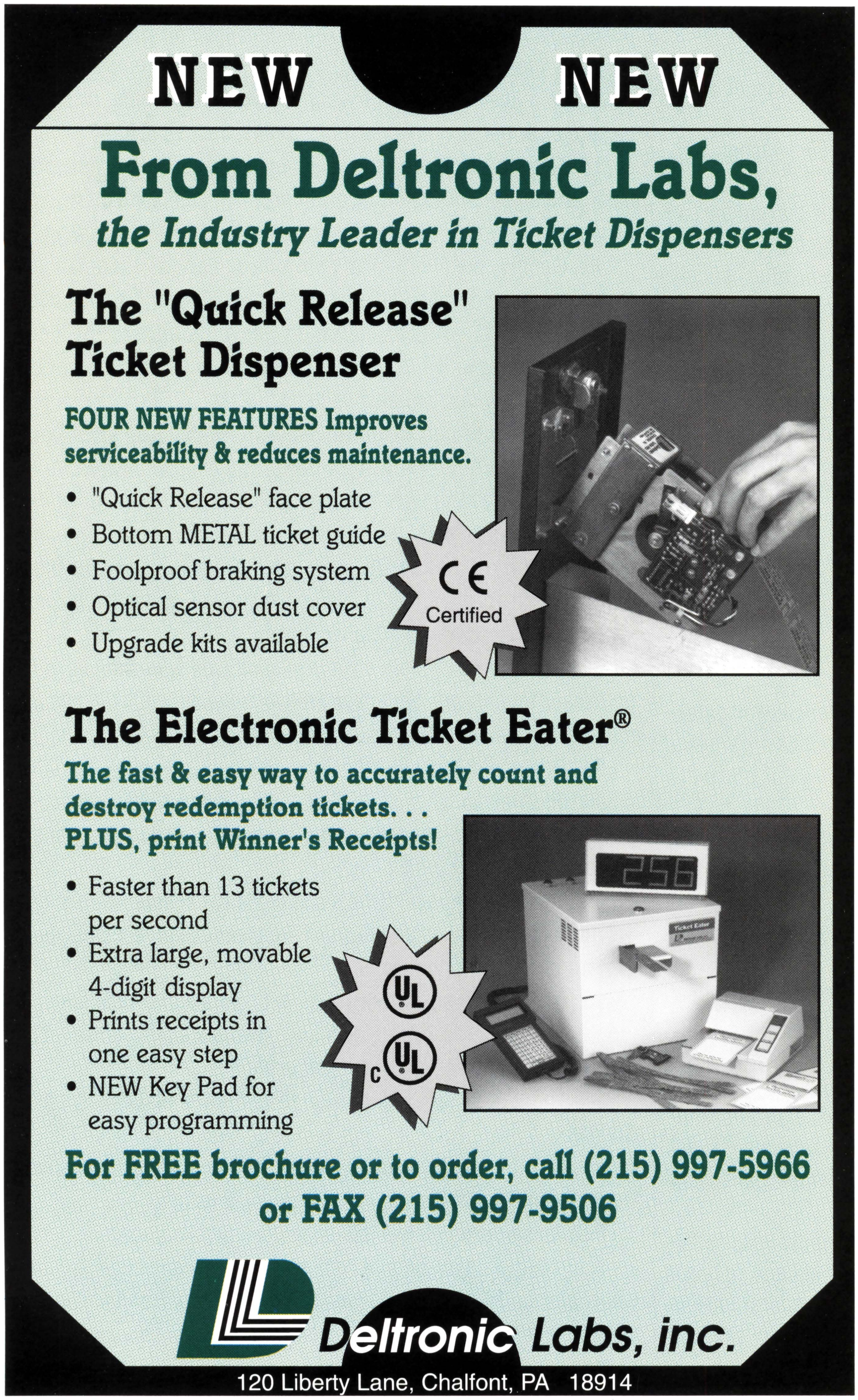
The redemption counter is in a dominant area at the end of the main walkway.

Redemption counter cabinets were purchased used and re-laminated to look brand new. Generous use of slat grids allow plenty of prizes to be displayed and remind customers of what they can win. Tim plans to offer larger items such as a mountain bike and television in the future, adding, "I've asked customers to tell us what items they would like us to have."

The future

Chuck and Jane are planning to attend the Fun Expo in October to continue learning more about the family entertainment center business. They realize that their work has just begun. Chuck commented, "When you open your doors it's the service that goes the furthest."

Fun Challenge is open Monday-Thursday 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; and Sunday noon-6 p.m. Teen Night is held 9 p.m.-midnight on Saturdays. Admission fees are $3 for children under four; $5.25 for children over four; and $5.25 for teens (includes $2 in tokens). ▲



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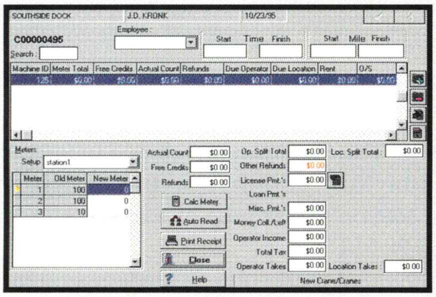


SOUTHSIDE DOCK J.D. KRONK 10/23/95

C00000495

Machine ID	Meter Total	Free Credits	Actual Count	Refunds	Due Operator	Due Location	Rent	O/S
125	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00

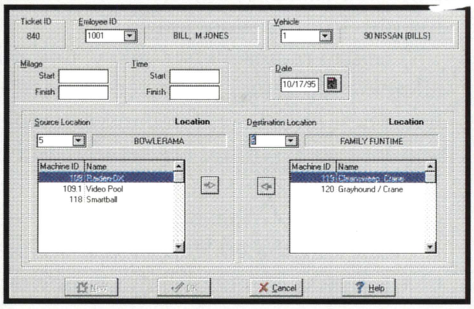
Setup: station1

Meter	Old Meter	New Meter
1	100	0
2	100	0
3	10	0

Actual Count $0.00
Free Credits $0.00
Refunds $0.00
Op. Split Total $0.00
Other Refunds $0.00
License Pmt.'s $0.00
Misc. Pmt.'s $0.00
Money Coll./Left $0.00
Operator Income $0.00
Total Tax $0.00
Operator Takes $0.00
Loc. Split Total : $0.00
Location Takes : $0.00

Employee :
Start Time Finish
Start Mile Finish
Search :
Meters
Loan Pmt.'s
Calc Meter
Auto Read
Print Receipt
Close
Help
New Crane/Cranes

Collections



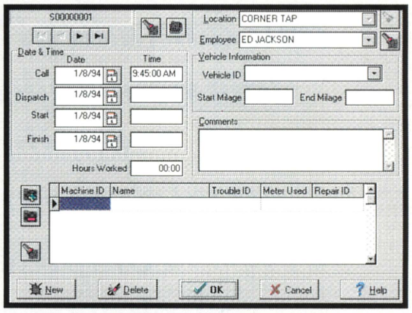
Ticket ID 840
Employee ID 1001 BILL, M JONES
Vehicle 1 90 NISSAN (BILLS)
Date 10/17/95
Source Location 5 BOWLERAMA
Destination Location FAMILY FUNTIME

Machine ID	Name
108	Raiden-DX
109.1	Video Pool
118	Smartball

Machine ID	Name
113	Cleansweep Crane
120	Grayhound / Crane

Milage
Start
Finish
Time
Start
Finish
Location
Location
New
OK
Cancel
Help

Rotations



S00000001
Location CORNER TAP
Employee ED JACKSON

	Date	Time
Call	1/8/94	9:45:00 AM
Dispatch	1/8/94	
Start	1/8/94	
Finish	1/8/94	

Hours Worked 00:00

Date & Time
Vehicle Information
Vehicle ID
Start Milage
End Milage
Comments
Machine ID
Name
Trouble ID
Meter Used
Repair ID
New
Delete
OK
Cancel
Help

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FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

Welcome to JEEPERS! Have a jungle of fun!

by Bonnie Theard

Billed as "Food, fun, and a monkey!" this new-style family entertainment complex emphasizes the restaurant aspect of a facility geared to children aged 2-12 and their parents.

JJ, TRISH, AND KRONKLE extend a warm welcome to Jeepers!, their 27,000-square-foot home at 700 Hungerford Drive in Rockville, Md., about 15 minutes from Washington, D.C.

The trio represent a monkey, tiny rhino, and Cheshire cat-like critter that are all new proprietary characters created by Jungle Jim's Playlands Inc. to help define a new style in entertainment complexes. The first location opened in January and four to five more are set to debut in the Northeast in rapid-fire succession. The second Jeepers! is scheduled for completion in late June or early July in another suburb of Washington, D.C., Greenbelt, Md.

According to Len Hoppe, JJPI vice president of marketing, "The demographics of the area very much lend themselves to our target demographics. In addition, we can take advantage of marketing efforts by advertising both centers at the same time. Our future direction is to concentrate on major metro areas and build several Jeepers! within those areas."

Jeepers!
No. 0002
January 18, 1996
Three thousand and five hundred and 00/100
3500.00
The Children's Inn @ NIH
VIP Grand Opening
Nabil El-Hage
BUBBA GUMP

JJPI chairman and CEO Nabil El-Hage presents a check for $3,500 to Margo Bradford of the Children's Inn at the National Institute of Health. The funds were raised at a VIP party and during the actual grand opening weekend of Jeepers!

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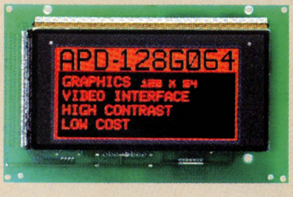
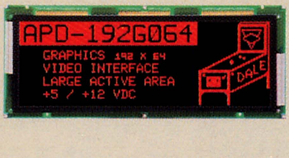
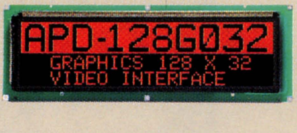
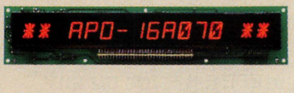

APD-128G064
GRAPHICS 128 X 64
VIDEO INTERFACE
HIGH CONTRAST
LOW COST


APD-192G064
GRAPHICS 192 X 64
VIDEO INTERFACE
LARGE ACTIVE AREA
+5 / +12 VDC
DALE


APD-128G032
GRAPHICS 128 X 32
VIDEO INTERFACE



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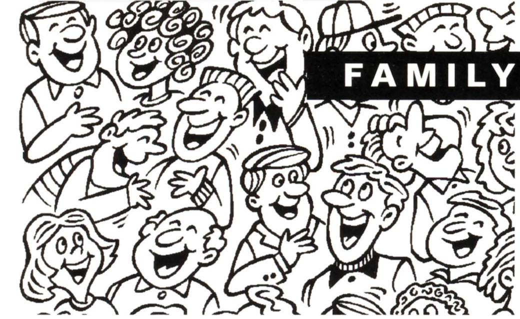


> *“We are very customer-oriented. The strategic direction is there and we are committed to making it work.”*

Jeepers! is an evolution of the Jungle Jim’s Playland locations that currently exist in San Antonio, Chicago, Kansas City, Salt Lake City, and Phoenix. All are company owned stores; there are three franchise locations in Mexico. Further expansion of Jungle Jim’s is possible in markets where the stores are already established, but any new markets will be entered with Jeepers!

While both Jungle Jim’s Playland and Jeepers! locations are indoor centers that share a jungle theme, the similarity ends there. Hoppe explains: “Jeepers! is more of a family restaurant entertainment center. Jungle Jim’s is an entertainment center with food availability.”

Jungle Jim’s offers a limited menu of hot dogs, popcorn, and pizza. Jeepers! has a Pizza Hut franchise within its doors as well as the Tiny Rhino Diner that features a ‘50s decor and a full family menu with choices such as potato skins, Caesar salad, burgers, pasta, and sub sandwiches. The Java the Hut gourmet coffee bar is a relaxing spot for adults while their children are playing.

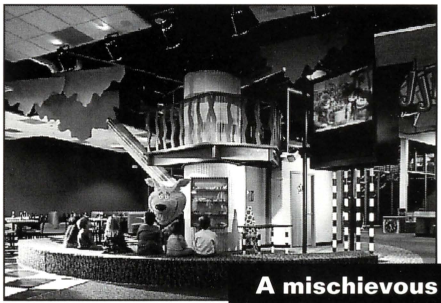
“We found that customers were looking for additional food items so we turned to more of a restaurant concept,” added Hoppe. “Jeepers! is different. It’s not your typical jungle theme, although it still has a jungle motif. We call it ‘Tarzan meets Nickelodeon.’ Since we opened in mid-January parents have been saying its the best thing they have ever seen.”

Three of the Jungle Jim’s locations have Pizza Huts inside as well. Their success contributed to Pizza Hut being part of Jeepers! “You know you are going to get Pizza Hut pizza,” noted Hoppe. “It’s the consistency factor that’s important. People know the brand and trust it for quality.”

The entertainment mix at Jeepers! includes five amusement park rides—the Python Pit Roller Coaster, Family Sizzler, JJ’s Driving School Bumper Cars, Jungle Jeeps, and Banana Squadron (flying banana ride for small children). Some of the rides accommodate both children and adults.

A number of fun expeditions can be selected: the Unlimited offers an entire day of rides and soft play; the Under 40 Pass (for children under 40” tall) includes unlimited access to soft play and Jungle Jeeps; and weekday passes. Families interested in a short visit can purchase single ride tickets. Special group rates are available for field trips and other occasions.

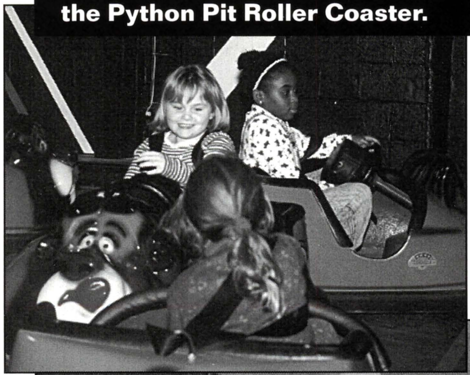
The tri-level soft play area is dominated by a large slide; the Jungle Jeeps can drive underneath and around the playground. Comfortable seating for parents is provided.



A mischievous Kronkle visits with young players.

Below: Young ladies enjoy JJ’s Driving School Bumper Cars.

Right: Adults and children can ride the Python Pit Roller Coaster.



The Tiny Rhino Diner features a ‘50s motif.

> *“We get adults involved in the fun and it becomes a better overall experience, which is our objective.”*

Birthday parties are an integral part of the Jeepers! experience. Parents can choose from three party packages: The Excellent Expedition, The Awesome Adventure, and The Ultimate. Each one offers a different mix of rides, soft play, game tokens, personalized birthday cake, balloons, return visit pass, and other extras.

Ninety percent of the games are redemption/novelty games and there are a few coin-op kiddie rides. Customers turn in their tickets at the Big Digs redemption area for T-shirts, stuffed animals, toys, and gift items. Videos include *Cruisin' USA, CyberCycles, Daytona USA,* and *Alpine Racer.*

Director of operations Joey Herd commented, “In our opinion there's no reason to have other videos in our types of locations. Our opinion is based on our customer's comments. Mom's despise videos; they are something she can do without. If you give children enough entertainment choices they don't miss the videos.”

Herd added that a lot of time was spent in designing a layout to make the center more pleasing for mom and dad, particularly reducing noise levels. “Changes were made to enhance the adults' experience,” said Herd. “We've seen our biggest increase in spending from adults playing games. We get them involved in the fun and it becomes a better overall experience, which is our objective.”

He promises a ride mixture that will be constantly changing, adding, “We try to stay as current as possible. We are very customer-oriented. The strategic direction is there and we are committed to making it work.”

Each new Jeepers! will involve the same successful elements but the physical footprint will change depending on the geography of the site. From the time the lease is signed and the building permit is obtained, it takes approximately 10 weeks to build the store.

Although the target market is children from two to 12 years old, Hoppe added, “We are not a boring place for a 13- or 14- year-old. Older siblings and their parents have a good time. That's what we are all about.”

JJPI headquarters are in Waltham, Mass. The chairman and CEO, Nabil El-Hage, has extensive experience in the restaurant industry and the venture capital and investment arena.

Jeepers! is open Sunday through Thursday 10 a.m.-9 p.m. and Friday and Saturday 10 a.m.-10 p.m. The name was selected after a brainstorming session and a contest among employees. ▲

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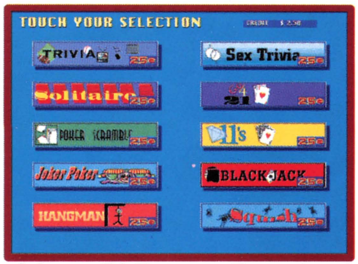
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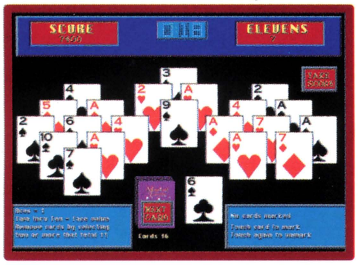
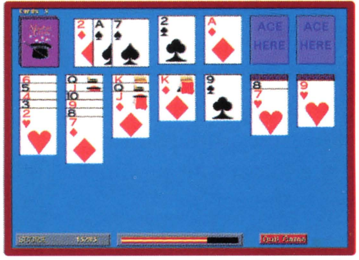
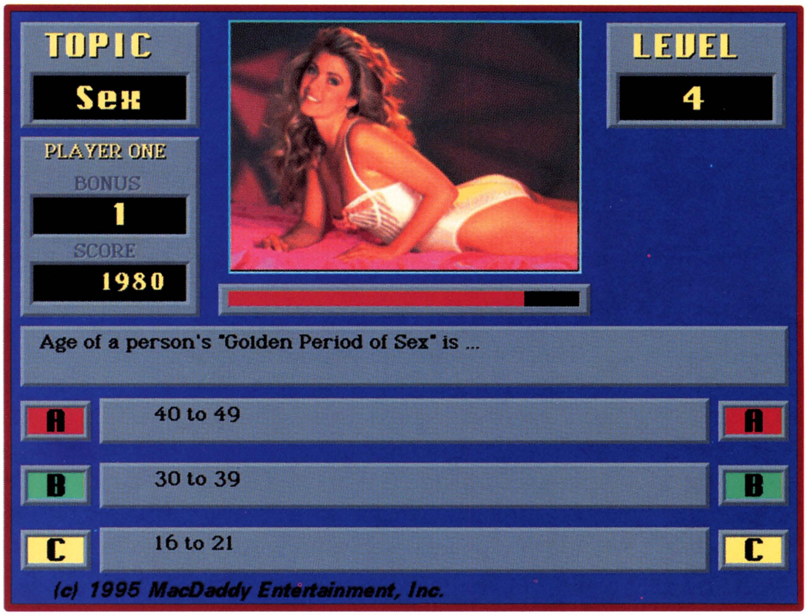

SCORE
ELEVENS

Diamond 11's
The Latest Rage


ACE HERE
ACE HERE

Solitaire - Flip 1 Card Or Flip 3


TOPIC
Sex

LEVEL
4

PLAYER ONE
BONUS
1
SCORE
1980

Age of a person's "Golden Period of Sex" is ...

A 40 to 49
B 30 to 39
C 16 to 21

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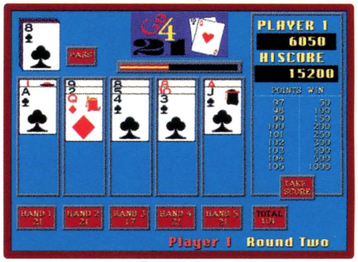
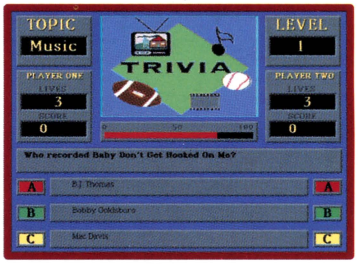

PLAYER 1
6050
HISCORE
15200
PASS
TAKE SCORE
Player 1 Round Two

Go-4-21
Multi-Hand Blackjack At it's Best


TOPIC
Music

LEVEL
1

PLAYER ONE
LIVES
3
SCORE
0

PLAYER TWO
LIVES
3
SCORE
0

Who recorded Baby Don't Get Hooked On Me?

A B.J. Thomas
B Bobby Goldsboro
C Mac Davis

Trivia
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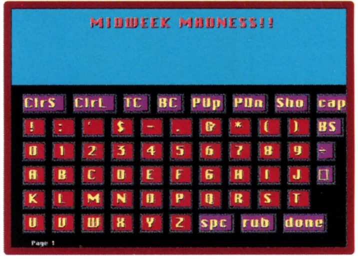
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Kiddie ride manufacturers are excited about the prospects for growth in the kiddie ride segment of the coin-op industry. There are more rides than ever, including licensed product featuring characters any child would recognize. But the familiar rides are also holding their own with new generations of children. We have asked the kiddie ride manufacturers how they would sum up the kiddie ride market today and what they see in the near future. They have given us some thought-provoking insight into this segment of our industry. Below their comments, you'll find a list of the rides they offer.

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Gumball Tanker

❝*The kiddie ride industry has so much room for growth. It's one of the best kept secrets in the industry. If every operator checked his route, he'd probably find that the only area for growth is in kiddie rides.*

But there is more to it than simply buying a ride and placing it. If I was advising an operator who is looking to get into the kiddie ride market, I'd tell him to first get educated about his locations. Not every ride is right for every location. Just like a distributor who recommends a certain video game for a special location, a kiddie ride salesman should be knowledgeable about which rides should do well in which locations. A salesman should be doing more than selling you a ride, he should be guiding you as to what to buy.❞

— John Nelson

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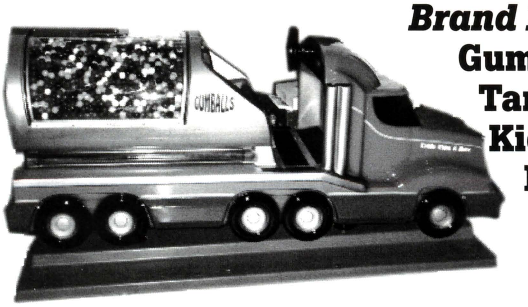

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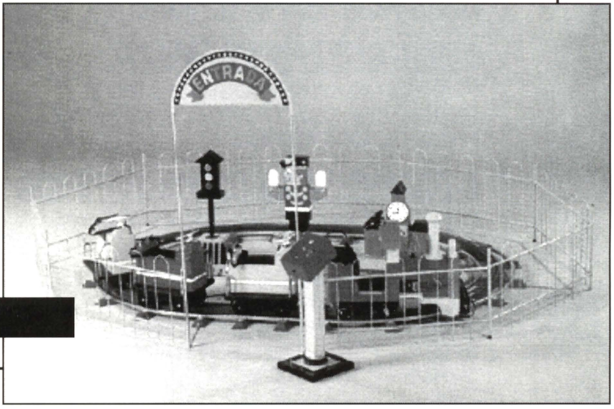
❝ *Kiddie rides is a long-established business that has undergone tremendous growth these last years. The industry boasts many manufacturers, producing rides of varying quality from very low to very high. There is also a broad range of prices from very cheap to very expensive.* ❞

— Mark Haim

Current Rides

- Dozer
- 4x4
- Swiss Boy
- Tin
- Helicopter
- Carousel
- Locomotive
- Express Train
- Fiesta Train
- Cosmic Train



Fiesta Train

Carousel International
(314) 392-7122

❝ *The kiddie ride industry has grown tremendously. Look at the exhibitors at trade shows! Ten years ago there would have been three or four; today there are 20 or more. The future for the kiddie ride industry is promising.*

Today's kiddie ride operator is faced with a challenge. While kiddie ride revenue has continued to grow so have expenses. Furthermore, the added cost of implementing modern merchandising concepts coupled with the purchase of contemporary rides requires that the industry consider 50-cent or higher vends.

Traditional rides like the Western Horse will always remain popular. However, history has a way of repeating itself and these rides will cost more to buy and operate. Much like in 1968, it will take new products to effect change. ❞

— Norwood Veatch

Current Rides

- Speedster II Video
- Lil' Fire Engine Redemption
- Carousel
- Speedster I
- Merry-Go-Round
- Kentucky Derby
- Twin Horse
- Willie Dolphin
- Big Rig 484 Tractor Truck
- Monster 4x4 Truck
- Skycopter Helicopter
- Allies Happy Day Express
- Express Train Ride
- Kiddies Convertible
- Street Machine Convertible
- Kid Kop 54 Police Car
- Sleek Streak Convertible
- Indy Race Car
- Wave Jumper Speed Boat
- Super Speedster
- Carousel Horse
- Champion Horse
- Thunder Horse
- Lucky Horse
- Carnival Horse
- Muffin the Talking Horse
- Two Wheel Motor Bike
- Space Shuttle
- Three-Wheel All Terrain Bike
- Three-Wheel Police Bike
- Sammy Saurus
- Donnie Donkey
- Vantastic Delivery Van
- Trunks Elephant
- Little Toot Train
- Pony Ride
- Susie Pig
- Jungle Lion
- Kid Kop 54 Patrol Car
- Kid Phone Egg Machine

Speedster II
BASF
Havoline

Speedster II

Coastal Amusements
(908) 905-6662

“Our kiddie rides sales have climbed in the last year, so I would have to say that the kiddie ride industry is growing immensely. Or the operators are finding out that the Whittaker rides are just the best darn rides on the market!

Seriously, in speaking with kiosk mall operators and the fun center operators, all agree that with the rides operating at 50 cents the investment is sound. Ridership is up and so are receipts. The large fun centers which operate in the malls are even pressuring the mall owners for rights to kiosk locations. Kiosk operators are finding new mall locations as mall owners look for additional income and are now opening malls to kiddie rides which were previously closed to them.”

— Joe Tunney

Santa Fe Sam

Current Rides

- Clown Car
- Dinosaur
- Flying Pig
- Happy Hippo
- Jet Hawk
- Jumbo Elephant
- Nessey
- Old Mac's Van
- Park Ranger
- Police Van
- Santa Fe Sam
- School Bus
- Toad Mobile
- Tommy Turbo
- Clown See Saw
- Clown Train
- Fire Engine with Fireman
- Mean Machine
- Night Hawk
- Noah's Ark
- Old Toby Tug
- Panda Bear See Saw
- Robert E. Lee
- Sea Hawk
- Small Turtle
- Teddy Bear See Saw
- Turbo Race Car
- Welephant

EMT Kiddie Rides
(800) 207-9910

“Over the past few years, coin-op kiddie ride sales in the United States have grown tremendously, due in part to the growth of FECs. Kiddie rides have become a stable element of all size FECs because kiddie rides are attractive for younger children unable to play sophisticated games.

Now that the FEC boom is tapering, kiddie ride operators are looking to nontraditional locations, like operating kiddie ride kiosks in shopping malls. These kiosks provide safe, unassuming entertainment for the young children of shoppers. Mall managers have found this arrangement beneficial since satisfied children mean longer stays for parents.

For the kiddie ride market to continue to grow, operators must continue to look to new, nontraditional coin-op markets as they continue to increase their revenues.”

–John Tracy

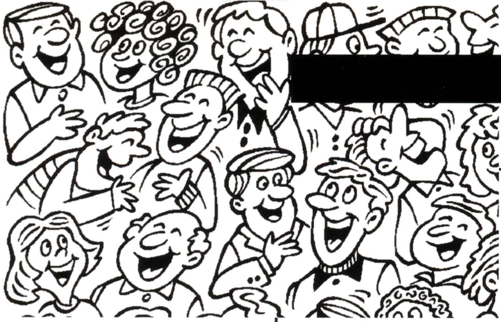
Current Rides

EMT Value Line
- Ferrari

Standard Line
- Rio Grande Train
- Bulldozer
- Jeep
- Nesse
- Mustang
- Black Rider
- Dozer
- Music Swing Lion

Interactive Series
- Turbo 2000
- Mercedes 2000
- SkyWolf 2000

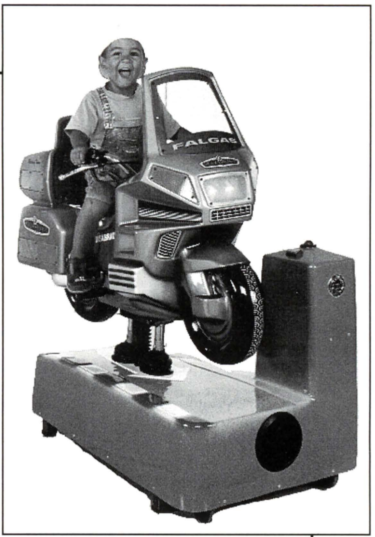
Mercedes



Falgas U.S.A.

(305) 471-0476

❝The kiddie ride industry is presently very competitive. The rides today are very sophisticated and detailed. Developers worldwide are concentrating more on the entertainment/family center concept. Certainly the outlook for the future is promising.❞ — Clara Fernandez



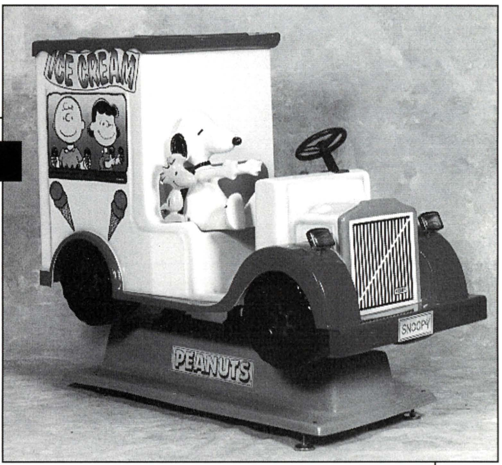
Goldwing Motorcycle

Current Rides

- Carousels
- Trains
- Horses
- Western Wagons
- Cars
- Flight Simulators
- Stars Explorer
- Racing Car w/video
- Helicopters
- Rockets
- Animals
- Motorcycles
- Clown Ferris Wheel
- Hydraulic Rides
- Astronaut Video
- Tobogan Gorilla/Elephant

Just Kiddie Rides Inc.

(516) 293-8129



Peanuts Ice Cream Truck

❝I believe the kiddie ride industry is just beginning to get the recognition it deserves. This is based upon the revitalization of this segment of coin-op through the introduction of licensed kiddie rides. The industry will continue to mature. I believe licensed products will be the key to the future of the kiddie ride industry. We have more licensed products than all other companies combined. We have proven that licensed kiddie rides generate far greater income than generic rides. We will continue to introduce new and exciting kiddie rides each year. Some of our best customers started by purchasing one ride. I suggest to anyone interested in getting into the kiddie ride business, purchase one ride. I am confident that additional purchases will be made shortly after the first ride is purchased.❞ — Jerry Reda

Current Rides

- Carousel
- Mini Lion
- Mini Elephant
- Mini Unicorn
- Mini Zebra
- Fun Train
- Happy Train
- Delivery Van
- Big Foot 4x4
- Trike Cycle
- Ninja Cycle
- Super Cycle
- Horse
- Wave Runner
- Space Shuttle
- Red Baron
- Submarine
- Space Robot
- Helicopter
- Chopper
- Jeep
- Boat
- Ferrari
- Indy 500 Car
- Nascar
- Porsche 911
- F14 Fighter Jet
- X-19 Jet
- Galactic Fighter
- Bulldozer
- Dolphin
- Happy Whale

(licensed rides)

- Flintmobile
- Dino
- Loggin Continental
- Jetsons Ship
- Jetsons Police Cycle
- Tom & Jerry Cycle
- Batmobile
- Cheesemobile
- Peanuts Ice Cream Truck
- Peanuts Fire Truck
- Peanuts Bi-Plane
- Wacky Racer Car
- Wacky Racer Truck
- WWF Racer Car
- Spidermobile

Licensed to Profit!

If you're looking to increase your profit margin, **licensed rides** are the only way to go. Time and time again **licensed rides** have proven to increase profits by 60% to 80%.

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And the characters of **Just Kiddie Rides/Kiddies** are the most loved and recognized of all.

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So don't delay, call today!
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FAX: 516-293-1268

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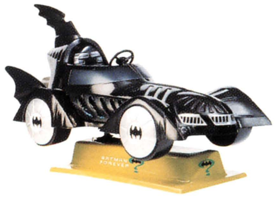
TOM & JERRY



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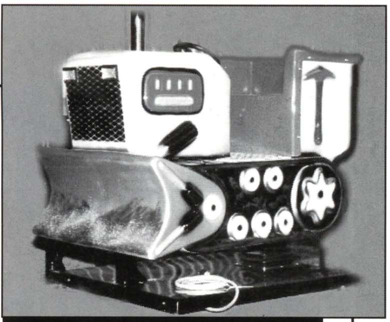
(601) 845-7501



Dozer

❝I planted my feet firmly into this business as a kid with the intent of being around awhile. Since my start 32 years ago, a lot of stores, manufacturers, and operators have come and gone, but I'm still here.*

We in the ride industry know where we have come from, but many are unsure where we are going. We were founded on several large national companies operating the large chains and many hundreds of smaller mom and pop operations making good incomes both full- and part-time with a few rides. Is it good for the large to get larger and the small to get smaller or are they simply becoming a thing of the past?

None can deny that licensed rides have opened many doors that were closed in yesteryears, but are the licensed rides going to create a monster for our industry? Where do we go with a theme ride that has lost its popularity?

Is the rush of a few to control the licensed products going to create a dictatorship within our ranks? As I see it all a manufacturer has to do to keep his doors open is sell his idea of a different, new licensed ride as needed. What happens to the poor operator trying to stay afloat?

A lot has been said about horses, boats, and planes and their place in the market. When all is said and done, the real truth is that a horse is a horse. Boats and planes will give competitiveness to our pricing and freedom to build and operate what we want.❞

— Tom Dudley

Current Rides

- Kiddie Car
- Vet
- Bug
- Kopter
- Dozer
- Carousels (various models)
- 18-Wheeler
- 2x4 Truck
- 4x4 Truck
- Tugboat
- Hydro-Boat

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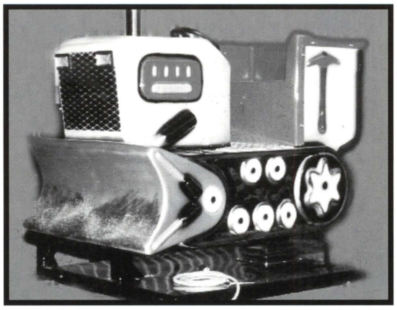

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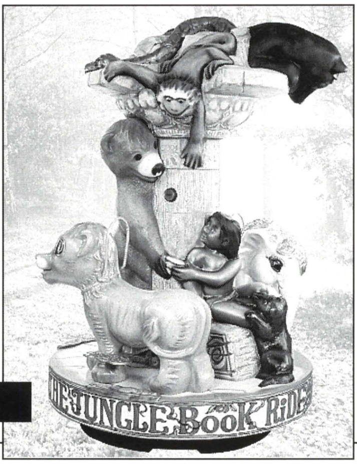
playmeter@aol.com

The Kiddie Ride Co.
(412) 963-1101

❝The opportunities for kiddie rides have presented themselves in all sorts of applications. The days of the rocking horse outside the local grocery are changing. Rides available today are more sophisticated, more creative, and more interesting.

However, when evaluating the many kiddie ride companies, it is very important to consider not only the design but the reliability of the product. We advise buyers to be careful to align themselves with a reputable company with the capabilites to assist with technical issues and respond to parts requests. Buy the most reliable products on the market. They may be a bit more expensive but if your ride is not working, your revenues and return on investment will be impaired. Do yourself a favor; get references.❞ — Stacey Edelstein



Jungle Book Ride

Current Rides
- Teddy Turbo
- Magic Roundabout
- Jungle Book
- Breakdown Truck
- Crusader
- Drakkon
- Fair Lady Horse
- Fire Truck
- Formula 1
- Gal 'Tracker
- Helicopter
- Hot Rod
- Interceptor
- Jet Car
- Road Hawk
- Sea Scooter
- Space Shuttle
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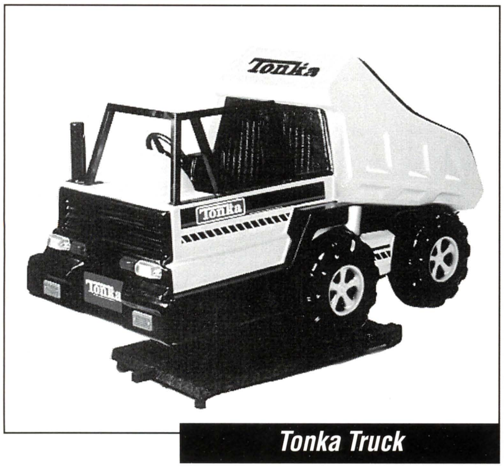
Kiddie Rides USA
(303) 399-7191

“The kiddie ride industry has begun to mature. With the introduction of licensed rides, the market has expanded dramatically. From a sleepy cottage industry to large production facilities the move has been impressive. Yet there are still companies that operate without insurance, service departments, and without product. If the industry is going to maintain its growth we must protect the operator and consumer. Make sure the company you deal with is reputable and carries the protection you'll need.

The tie in to large toy companies has presented new opportunities; cross promotions are being proposed to allow for easier placement by operators. We have entered a new arena which has the manufacturer and distributor offering financing and locations for the products we sell. Kiddie rides will continue to be in demand as merchants will continually look for ways to attract families to their stores.”

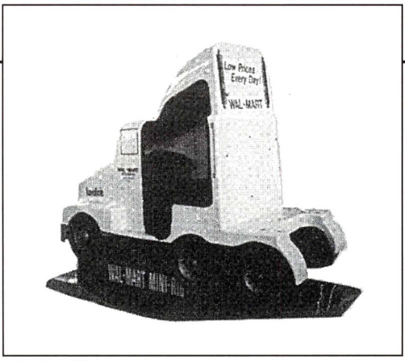
— Stuart Heller



Tonka Truck

Current Rides

- **18-Wheeler Truck**
- **A-Train**
- **Animals**
- **Apache**
- **Baby Dino**
- **Balloon**
- **Benetton**
- **Big Red Tractor**
- **Blue Ribbon Carousel**
- **Boat**
- **Bozo Car & School Bus**
- **Bulldozer**
- **Buster Bully**
- **Carousel Horse**
- **Chips Police Bike**
- **Cobra Tank**
- **Covered Wagon**
- **Danny the Dinosaur**
- **Fantastic Video Car**
- **Ferrari (diff. models)**
- **Fire Engine**
- **Firefox**
- **Formula Car**
- **Four Track**
- **Futuremobile**
- **G.I. Joe Army Tank**
- **G-Truck**
- **Goldwing Motorcycle**
- **Grand Prix**
- **Helicopter**
- **Indian Princess**
- **Iron Eagle**
- **Jeep Renegade**
- **Jerry the Giraffe**
- **Jimbo Elephant**
- **Kangaroo**
- **Kator**
- **Kiosk ride package**
- **Lotus Race Car**
- **Mack Truck**
- **Memphis Belle**
- **Mud Truck**
- **Nessie**
- **Noah's Ark**
- **Old Timer**
- **Police Car**
- **Puffin Billy**
- **Rabbit Cab**
- **Rally Star**
- **Red Baron**
- **Renault**
- **Robot**
- **Rocking Lion**
- **Santa Fe Train**
- **Sharp Eagle**
- **Skyhawk**
- **Space Train**
- **Sports Racer**
- **Super Bike**
- **Thunderbolt**
- **Tonka**
- **Tug Boat**
- **Van**
- **Western Horse**
- **Western Express Train**



Wal-Mart Semi Truck

Current Rides

- **Wal-Mart Semi Truck**
- **Search & Rescue Helicopter**
- **Lucky Star Horse**
- **2-Horse Carousel**
- **Sports Car**
- **Stomper Truck**
- **Elephant**
- **3-Wheeler Motorcycle**
- **4-Wheeler Motorcycle**
- **Soda Can Car**
- **Duck**
- **Small Semi Truck**

Kiddie World Inc.
(800) 535-4279

“Kiddie rides are on the edge of saturation. Investors and operators need to select quality built rides and spend according to what a location will return.”

— Robert Schlup

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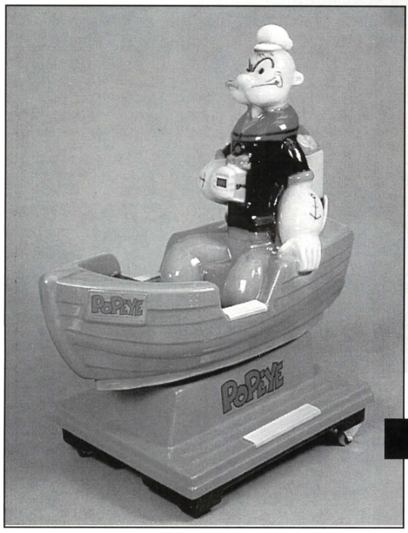
KIDDIE RIDES

Theisen Vending Co.
(612) 827-5588

❝The kiddie ride industry is the strongest it has been in recent years. Kiddie rides have evolved from painted fiberglass shells to hi-tech, gel-coated bodies and solid state electronics for greater longevity. Manufacturers are more sensitive to safety and quality, making rides more consumer friendly. Major malls and similar locations have opened their doors to kiddie rides and the atmosphere they create for the customer.❞

— Mike Ruegemer



Popeye

Current Rides

- Paddle Steamboat
- Mini Jeep
- Mini Train
- Mini Tractor
- Formula 1 Racing Car
- Bi-Plane
- Police/ATV Motorcycle
- Sante Fe Train
- Bulldozer
- Monster Jeep
- Veteran Van
- Helicopter
- Fire Truck
- Recovery Truck
- Construction Truck

(licensed rides)

- My Little Pony
- Popeye
- Mr. Blobby Boat
- Mr. Blobby See-Saw
- Pink Panther Police Van
- Pink Panther See-Saw
- Woody Woodpecker
- Lowly Worm Apple Car

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KIDDIE RIDE ASSOCIATION

Bill Chiles, Vice President

Kiddie rides are right for about any operator

The National Kiddie Ride Association (NKRA) is the largest collective group of kiddie ride operators in the United States. Its members operate tens of thousands of kiddie rides. In addition to offering insurance for kiddie rides, NKRA also offers coin-op liability insurance for video and bulk vending operators. NKRA has been insuring coin-op equipment since 1962 and has seen many changes in the industry over the years.

In the early days of kiddie rides there were not as many different models of rides available as there are today. The kiddie ride operators most often had a mechanical horse or carousel with an occasional car or spaceship from a handful of manufacturers. These days manufacturers offer hundreds of different models with sound, lights, interactive features, custom chain logos, and character or product licensing. There are more kiddie ride manufacturers than ever before.

Kiddie ride manufacturers are offering a wide variety of rides with many options, just like the automakers. In buying a kiddie ride, you should know your locations and what type of return is possible at specific locations. You may have locations that could start out with a few used rides for less than $1,000. However, you may have locations that would warrant more expensive rides and still see a fair return on investment.

As far as new rides there are the basic generic characters like a horse or a car with motion starting in the $1,600 range. Then for a little more money an operator can buy a ride with sound and lights, company logo, or a more detailed paint job. An operator would probably want to purchase an interactive, licensed, hydraulic, educational ride, or one of each for high end locations. With the variety to choose from, you can see there is a ride for every location.

The kiddie ride industry is going through a period of growth right now that should continue into the 21st century. For years kiddie rides were known simply as "the horse" in front of the local grocery store. The introduction of licensed, custom, and interactive rides and U.L. and E.T.L. certifications made rides more desirable to locations that never considered kiddie rides before. A location can get a kiddie ride to follow their theme and color scheme with their company logo.

Possible kiddie ride locations are limitless. While most malls and chain stores have them, there are numerous opportunities waiting in grocery stores, strip malls, restaurants, and convenience stores that don't have kiddie rides. These locations may not earn as much as a mall location, but the more equipment an operator has out, the more income he'll have coming in. And remember I said before that there is a ride for every location! More locations also afford more opportunities to rotate rides, keeping a fresh look in all of your locations.

The days of buying one hot piece with the expectation of getting rich off of it are long gone. Kiddie rides are an important part of the mix of any coin-op business from route operators to family entertainment centers. The growth of FECs is a boon to kiddie ride operators. Parents are looking for entertainment for the entire family in one location and more and more people are trying to give it to them.

The concept is simple: if operators offer something for the older sibling to enjoy while mom puts the younger child on a kiddie ride, you're getting income from two pieces. If both children are happy the parents want to let them stay longer. This translates into more coins in the cash box.

As FECs open up, more traditional video game operators are diversifying into kiddie rides to either increase profits or to become full service operators. They are reacting to the new demand for equipment they may not have had in the past.

Return on investment on video games is not as great as in past years,

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TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

YOU WANT IT? - CALL AND GET IT!

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TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

A manufacturer of laser tag equipment, Ascension Productions is now offering a promotion that is unheard of in the laser tag industry: Try Before You Buy. With their goal of opening 250 Lazer Runner sites in 1996, Ascension has designated 125 Lazer Runner Battle Stations as "Try Before You Buy" systems.

LAZER RUNNER BATTLE STATION

The Battle Station is a high end, but affordable laser tag system that includes everything that the expensive systems offer. Plus, it's modular, expandable, and quick and easy to set up or move.

The Battle Station appeals to a wide range of venues including indoor family fun centers, amusement parks, bowling centers, water parks, shopping centers, carnival circuits, tourist destinations, go-cart tracks, mini-golf centers, etc.

The system comes with fourteen phasers and fibre-optic vests (7 per team), but can easily be expanded at anytime by adding more phasers. Included with the system is individual scoring, team scoreboard, remote scoreboard reset, remote startup super control, cash control system, smart charging module, two homebase stations, vibrating hit sensors, battle sector mines that shoot back at players, intruder warning detectors, black lights, strobes, flashing beacons, CD sound system with amplifier, fog machine, special effects package, AND as if that wasn't enough, the complete Battle Station Arena (it's spectacular)!

Everything is included - there is nothing else to purchase and no leasehold improvements to do. The modular arena can be made any shape and size that an amusement facility requires. Installation is remarkably easy. The manufacturer's set-up crew completes it in only two days! The interior of the Battle Station is drenched in black light and florescent graphics. The game is fast-paced and the phasers talk to you during the game.

"One very important fact distinguishes us from other laser tag manufacturers. . . we're not just retailers of equipment - we also operate our own sites."

Doug Wilson , Ascension Productions Inc.

"Imagine this," says Doug Wilson of Ascension Productions, "No matter what your budget, no matter what size your FEC, you can now have a state of the art modular Lazer Runner Battle Station with all the extras set up on your site by our crew in just days. You can try our product to see if it's what you expected - if not, we'll remove it - no problem."

"Our product has been tested, re-tested and re-tested again to make certain it is user friendly and profitable! One very important fact distinguishes us from most other laser tag manufacturers. We operate our own sites. Not just one or two, we operate our own equipment in Lazer Runner sites all over the world. All are profitable!"

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Family entertainment centers have been lining up to take advantage of this unprecedented offer. "Our phones have been ringing off the hook" says Doug Wilson. "No-one can believe that we actually let you try our Battle Station to see if it's all we say it is. All you have to do is call us for a Try Before You Buy Application form to take advantage of this fantastic offer."

You can even use the money you make in the 60 day trial period towards your down payment!

Once your application is approved, a Lazer Runner crew sets up your Battle Station and trains you on using the equipment. You then operate the system at your site for 60 days and decide if you want to purchase it. You can even use the money you make in the 60 day trial period towards your down payment.

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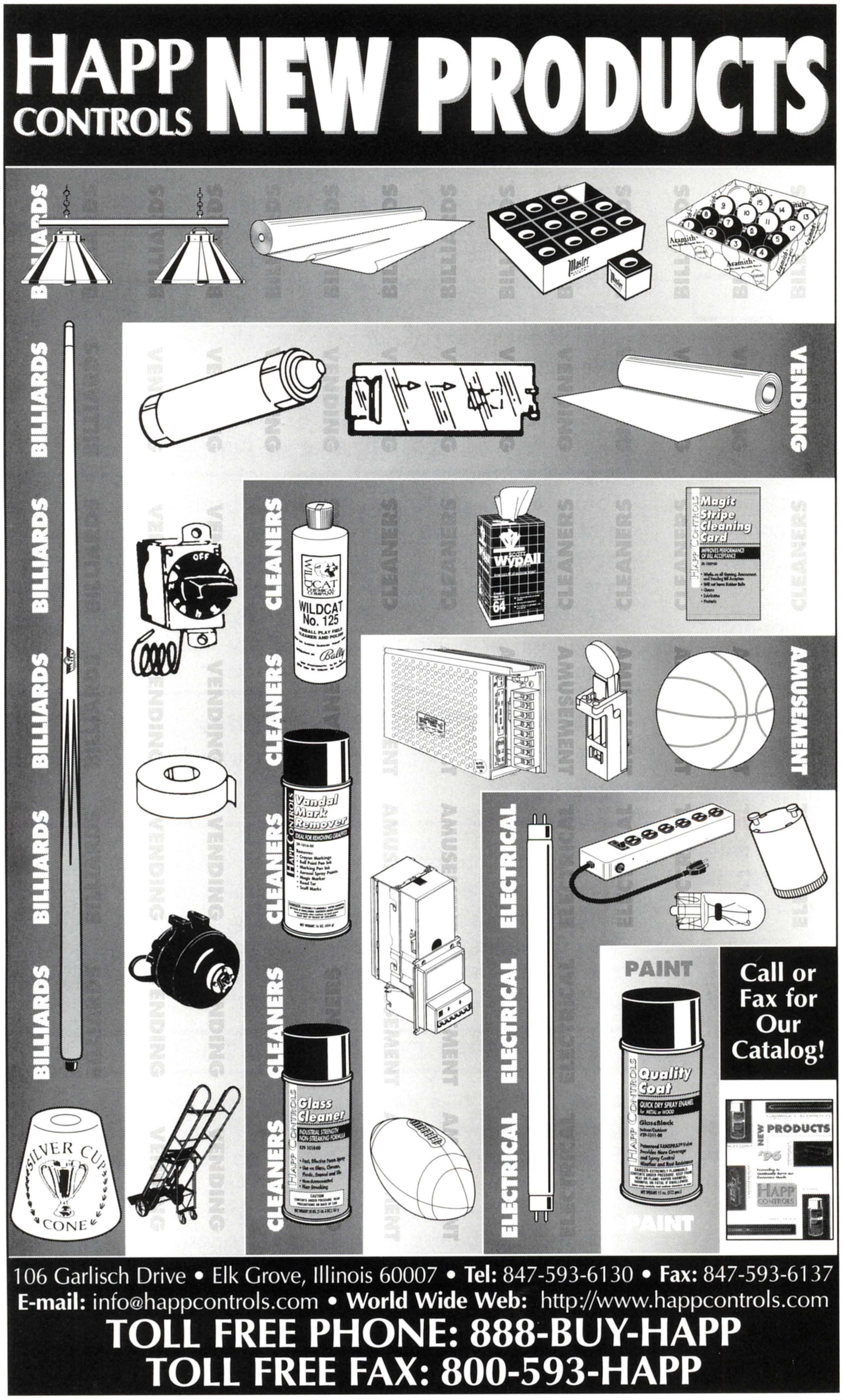
> **"Operators should take advantage of the growth of the kiddie ride industry and offer rides to locations before their competitors do."**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and operators need equipment that will give a good return and keep earning for years. Kiddie rides can last many, many years with proper care and maintenance. Full service operators offer all types of equipment like vending, videos, bulk vending, and kiddie rides to keep other operators from placing equipment in their locations.

Diversification is the key to the future in coin-op.

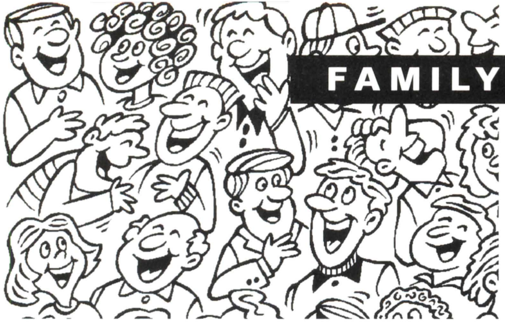
Even bulk vending operators are finding that kiddie rides are a nice fit into their business plans. I see the kiddie ride industry continuing to grow in leaps and bounds for the next few years because smart operators are diversifying.

There are large corporations downsizing to simplify operations. They are finding it easier to deal with one operator instead of three or four for their coin-operated entertainment needs. The aggressive operator that offers all types of coin-op equipment will thrive well into the 21st century, while the ones who don't want to change will see the industry pass them by.

My advice to any operator who is contemplating kiddie rides is to try a couple and see how they perform. I'm certain that once an operator tries kiddie rides he'll be so pleased with the return on investment he will place even more out on location. Operators should be aware that claims on kiddie rides are more common than claims on games or bulk vending. However, if operators have any questions about that they can contact our association.

Operators should take advantage of the growth of the kiddie ride industry and offer rides to locations before their competitors do. ▲

[The National Kiddie Ride Association is located in Missouri. The phone number is (573) 636-3564.]



FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

FEC future optimistic with proper business plan

by Carole Sjolander, Executive Director, IAFEC

We're in the fun business, we like to say, and some of us are having fun—making profits and contributing to our communities. I've visited quite a few FECs during my first year as executive director of the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers, and taken a bit of a crash course in the business. I remain optimistic about the future of FECs and the amusement and entertainment businesses, but one would have to be an ostrich not to see that some are failing.

In fact, hardly a week goes by without some mass media reporter calling to ask if this is an industry that has peaked. Discovery Zone's recent Chapter 11 reorganization prompted a deluge of calls. So I've given some thought to why some are failing, while at the same time others are doing well. And of course, there's a group in the middle that are finding the going tough, but they're hanging in there.

Beware of these pitfalls:

1. Undercapitalization or faulty revenue and expense projections. If the numbers aren't right going in, the odds are pretty bad. I hear, "An investor pulled out." Or, "We've never reached the revenue projections."

Another common occurrence is construction costs that got out of hand. Or, as a friend of mine likes to say, "They built the church for Easter Sunday."

The size and scope of the facility needs to fit the potential customer base. Overbuilding is the same as overspending. We frequently get calls from someone who has visited the local FEC or one in a neighboring location on a busy Saturday and decided this is just the business he or she should be in. Or they've read in Entrepreneur magazine that this is one of the top growth businesses. We tell them to return at midday on Tuesday and then call us back.

If the capitalization is inadequate or shaky, if the projections are overblown, if the construction or opening costs get out of hand, the project is a prime candidate for failure.

2. Failure to do and follow a comprehensive marketing plan. Too often marketing is seen as advertising and promotion. I remember a basic marketing class I took years ago. After all these years, I recall the carefully memorized concept of the four Ps: product, price, place, promotion.

It's easy to get caught up in advertising and promotion and never take the time to do a thorough marketing plan that starts with the product itself.

What is this facility all about? What is its niche? How does it compare with and differentiate itself from the competition? A comprehensive, well thought out marketing plan that is consistently carried through is a hallmark of the more successful FECs.

While there are no guarantees for success, the FEC failure rate can be reduced with realistic expense projections, a good marketing plan, budgeting for new attractions, and understanding customer needs.

3. Failure to use market research and objective data. It's tempting to just "know" things—to rely on our gut (males) or intuition (females). But what I note is that the most professional and successful managers rely on hard data. And they use it on a regular basis, not just prior to opening.

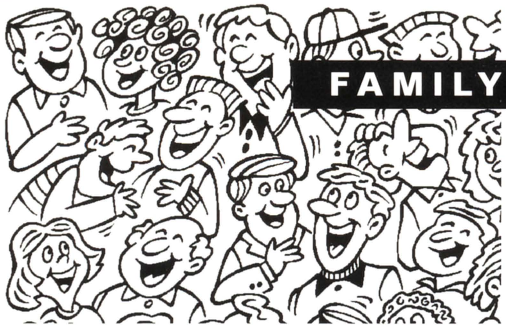
You won't know, unless you make it your business to know, who your customers are and what they want in entertainment.

I am constantly amazed by what demographic studies can tell us now about the people in our market area. First, there are the basics—age, income, education, family size, and ethnicity. But that's just the beginning. If there is something you would like to know about the people in your market area, that data is available.

The most astute managers are doing their own market research. When we surveyed facility owners and operators at Fun Expo last year we found that 20 percent did not know what percentage of their guests are repeat customers; 11 percent didn't know the average spending per person, per visit; and 18 percent didn't know their annual attendance.

You can't know these numbers without making an effort to know. IAFEC's first guest survey program will take place this spring and summer. Participating locations will survey their guests using a computer-based questionnaire. (If your facility is interested in participating in this survey, call the IAFEC, (914) 993-9297 for details.)

4. Failure to plan for, and budget



"A well thought out marketing plan that is consistently carried through is a hallmark of the more successful FECs."

for, renovation and renewal. The most successful FECs are constantly reinvesting and using their creativity to provide a continually new experience for their guests. In an article originally printed in the IAFEC Fun Extra newsletter and reprinted in this issue, Frank Seninsky shows how relatively small investments in new games can provide a perception of a much greater change.

If you aren't keeping up to date on the latest products and trends, and if you haven't budgeted to include new attractions. you're a prime candidate for "sophomore slump," the "Where did the all the customers go?" syndrome.

Someone else has attracted your customers' entertainment dollar by offering them something new while your product lost its newness. Let me put in a little plug for our Fun Expo (Las Vegas, Oct. 9-12) as an ideal shopping forum for new products and ideas.

5. Failure to understand and maximize profit centers. A concept of time management is that 20 percent of our effort produces 80 percent of our results. When you know your operation and you know your customers, you can make good decisions on where to put your efforts and dollars to maximize results. It's not difficult to analyze games. The tokens are your measuring stick.

Group sales, those wonderful birthday parties, are the golden goose for many facilities. Do you have someone whose job is developing and nurturing this aspect of your business?

If go-karts are your biggest draw and revenue producers, keep them in top shape and earmark a good portion of your marketing efforts in this area.

Food service is one area that offers often overlooked opportunities. If you don't have it, hire someone with expertise in food service.

We seem to be seeing a trend to contracting out food service. This may make sense for some, but think about it. Think bigger than hot dogs and soft drinks. There's money in food and beverage.

While the focus here has been on the negative, by turning it inside out and avoiding these potentially fatal errors, a manager can go a long way towards ensuring success. But, one final fatal error good managers never make—they don't take success for granted. ▲

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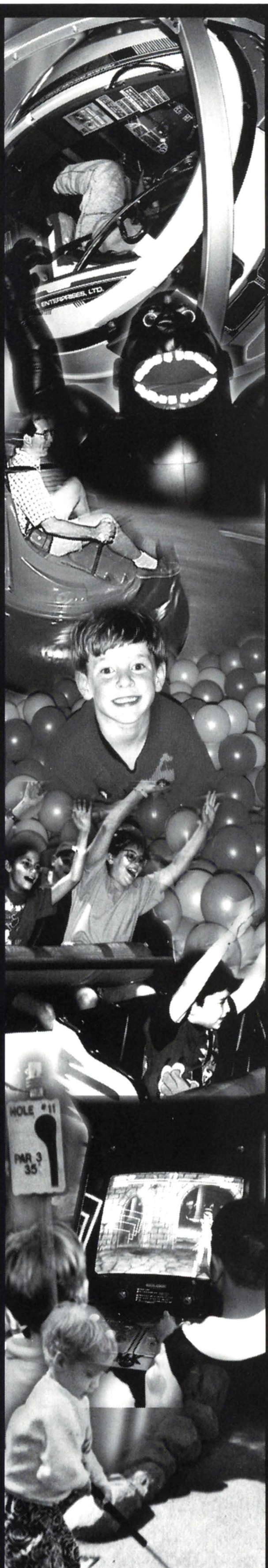

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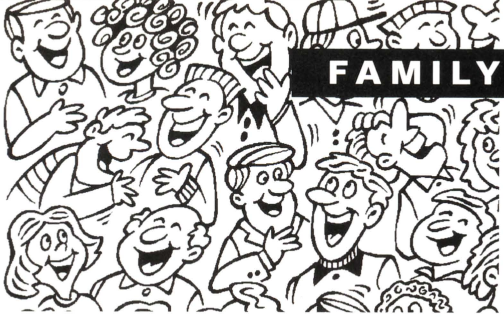
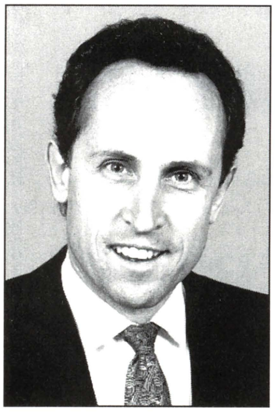


FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

FECs and AMOA members share common ground



Opportunities exist for coin machine operators and FECs to blend their strengths and deliver memorable entertainment experiences to the public.

Members of the Amusement and Music Operators Association, the owners and operators of coin-operated amusement and redemption equipment, kiddie rides, and vending machines, are most definitely involved with the FEC industry.

It has taken more than a few years for FECs to evolve and take on an identity of their own. The industry still seems to be in a state of flux as to the number, location, and exact style of FECs any given market can support.

We have seen the success and failure of various concepts and FECs irrespective of size, single unit, or national chain ownership. The shakeout is continuing, but the survivors are strong and provide opportunities for AMOA members.

The proof is in the membership of AMOA. FECs are clearly opportunities for coin machine route operators. In 1995 AMOA operator members reported 17.3 percent of their location mix was in the FEC market. As of April 1996, AMOA members have increased this category to 27 percent of their location mix.

As FECs mature and strive for profitability, they are turning to the traditional and professional coin machine route operators to add value to their facilities. FECs are complex and very diverse entertainment businesses. FEC owners are looking more and more to the experts and specialists to provide them with equipment and services.

The coin machine route operator is a natural fit to provide even the most established FEC with new machines and product knowledge, machine maintenance, technical repair service, machine rotation, game accounting, and other details of the machine operating business.

This partnership improves the FEC's ability to supply the game and arcade portion of their facility for the public, and therefore add to the location's overall success. FECs have become and will continue to be a natural demographic trend for AMOA operator members. As long as there is a demand by young parents and baby boomers for wholesome family entertainment as provided by FECs, coin machine operators will continue to work with them.

During AMOA's International Expo '96 in Dallas (Sept. 26-28) we will continue to feature an FEC track within the seminar schedule. Expo '95 introduced six very well attended FEC-related seminars over the three days of the show. These seminars are at no additional charge to show attendees and have been very successful in attracting many old and new members to the world of FECs.

Expo '96 will continue to address the current needs of operators regarding servicing all the complex aspects of FECs. The success of last year's seminar/tour will be repeated during Expo '96.

This year AMOA will offer a seminar/tour that will not only focus on a local Dallas FEC, but also include a tour of the production plant of a laser tag manufacturing company. Expo '96 will target the FEC audience of facility owners/managers, equipment manufacturers, and operators/suppliers of commercial products for FECs. The marketing plan will include FEC trade publications and international press to attract more of the global market.

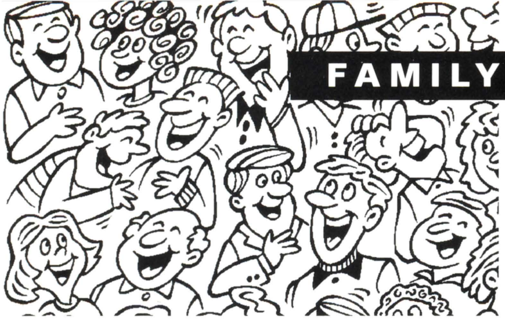
Since serving as chairman of AMOA's Government Relations Committee, it has become apparent that operators and FECs have a large number of issues in common. Government regulations and policies are always present in our everyday business lives. AMOA's efforts on such issues as taxation, workplace regulations, safety standards, dollar coin promotion, redemption machine laws, video game content rating systems, and other important industry topics are beneficial to AMOA operator members as well as FEC owners/operators.

Within this segment of the entertainment industry, ongoing and positive government relations activity is an area where AMOA is second to none. AMOA welcomes the chance to work with all affiliated industry groups to broaden our base and build stronger coalitions to promote industry causes in Washington, D.C., and throughout the country.

We feel that AMOA and its members have always been connected with the FEC marketplace. AMOA's staff recently told me that a week does not go by without an existing FEC or start-up FEC calling for information or general assistance. We are happy to asssist them and share industry knowledge. FECs are part of the natural evolution of the industry and a welcome partner in the coin machine operating community. ▲

by Gene Winstead

Secretary and Government Relations Committee Chairman, AMOA



FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

What the survey showed

Ed Pearson, Vice president of IAFEC

Did you know:

- The largest segment of the family entertainment industry operates "indoor only" facilities.
- The average spending per person in an FEC is between $5 and $9.99.
- That 20 percent of all FEC operators don't know what percentage of their guests are repeat customers.
- That insurance is the number one concern for operators in our industry.
- That nearly half of the industry operators surveyed do not support the dollar coin initiative.
- Year-round schools have had a slightly positive to very positive impact for 28 percent of the FEC operators surveyed.

These are just some of the results of the second annual International Association of Family Entertainment Centers (IAFEC) industry research survey conducted at Fun Expo '95 in Orlando, Fla. In all, 440 industry professionals participated in the survey.

Many of the same questions used in the first annual IAFEC survey conducted at Fun Expo '94 in Las Vegas are the same questions used in the '95 survey in order to identify trends throughout the industry. Following are just some of the more interesting statistics when comparing '95 to '94 results:

How has 1995 compared to 1994 in terms of total revenue for your business?

43%	Better than 1994.
15%	Same as 1994
16%	Worse than 1994
25%	N/A (Opened in 1995)

What is your annual operating expense budget (not including debt service)?

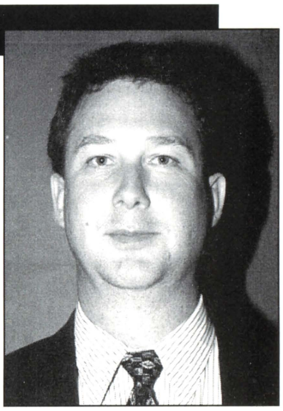
1995	1994	
13%	14%	Don't Know
7%	18%	Under $100,000
23%	19%	$100,000-249,999
13%	24%	$250,000-499,999
43%	24%	$500,000+

What percent of your annual budget do you spend on marketing, advertising, and public relations?

1995	1994	
48%	34%	0-5 percent
30%	40%	6-10 percent
7%	7%	11-15 percent
7%	8%	16% or more
8%	12%	Don't Know

The comparisons between 1994 and 1995 can reveal important trends and changes in the industry to help an operator or developer understand the constantly changing environment of the FEC industry, compare their individual accomplishments with other operators and developers, and to plan strategies for the upcoming year to maximize efficiencies of operations and ultimately improve the bottom line profits.

The 1995 Family Entertainment Center Industry Research Report provides the most comprehensive data available on the FEC industry. This 30-page report includes topics on characteristics of facilities, revenue/income and expense budgeting, customer habits, food and beverage service, marketing, tracking trends and public policy issues, types of attractions offered, financing options, and developer trends.



The survey is available to all members of IAFEC upon request at no charge. For non-members there is a cost of $150. For more information, contact IAFEC at (914) 993-9297. ▲

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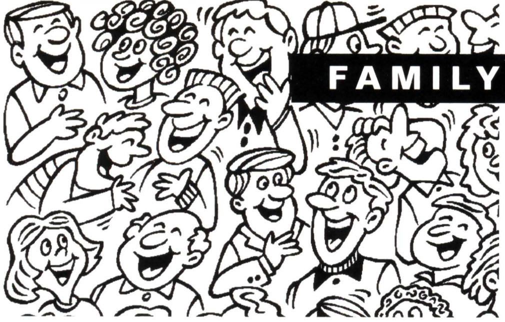


FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

The three myths of redemption games

Redemption games are a very important part of any FEC and should be earning a significant portion of the total revenues. If your redemption games are not one of your highest sources of revenue, perhaps you are under the spell of one of several of the myths that are cast around the FEC industry about redemption games.

• **MYTH #1** (the biggest myth of all): "You only buy the redemption games once for your FEC and they will last forever. All you have to do to keep making money is to change the merchandise." This myth goes back to the old amusement park era and the 1950s on the New Jersey Shore boardwalk arcades and is preached even today by some who are in the business of selling redemption games. FECs are a different animal. About 85 percent of an FEC's customer base is made up of repeat customers unlike the transient customers who visit large amusement parks and boardwalk arcades once or twice in a season.

People love to visit new places and see new things. Many FECs are seeing their revenues decline after the first year. The smart ones realize that everything in their FEC must change as often as possible to constantly (every month) bring in new redemption games and upgrade some existing models. We all know that video games need to be changed (rotated) at a minimum rate of five percent per month. Of course, there are special redemption games that will stay on location longer, but even *Skee-Balls* need to be upgraded nowadays.

The game layout positioning should also be changed as often as possible and customers will perceive that several different game have been brought in that they hadn't noticed before.

It just fascinates me to no end to hear customer reactions relating to change. For example, in one of our FEC locations that has 110 games, we had just brought in three new games and moved around another dozen games to new positions. When the customers came in we heard comments like: "Wow! Look at all the new games that they just put in!" and "There must be 20 new games here!"

• **MYTH #2**: "When it comes to birthday party driven FECs we hear, little kids will play anything that dispenses tickets." This may be partially true for very small children, but let me pose a very important question, "Who is the customer, the small children or the parent who brings that child?" This isn't a trick question. Logic dictates that both are the customer and both need to have an excellent experience. Parents are very sensitive to value and even if the small child is having fun, don't ever forget that the parents are also evaluating the experience from their own perspectives.

> ***"If a customer has a good experience on a visit, that customer has a 65 percent chance of coming back again."***

Redemption games need to offer an entertainment value plus a reward (combination of number of tickets and hit frequency) that is consistent for each game. This will take an entire article or seminar to fully explain, but the point here is that a redemption game needs to have a high entertainment value and that this translates into the fact that new redemption games (and they keep getting better and better) need to arrive at your FEC on a regular basis. The old ones are certainly not helping the image of your business.

• **MYTH #3**: "I can make a profit on the redemption counter by putting higher point values on the merchandise. The customer will never know." What a big mistake! Greed can cause the demise of any business! The whole idea behind redemption is to make sure that the customers get good value for their money.

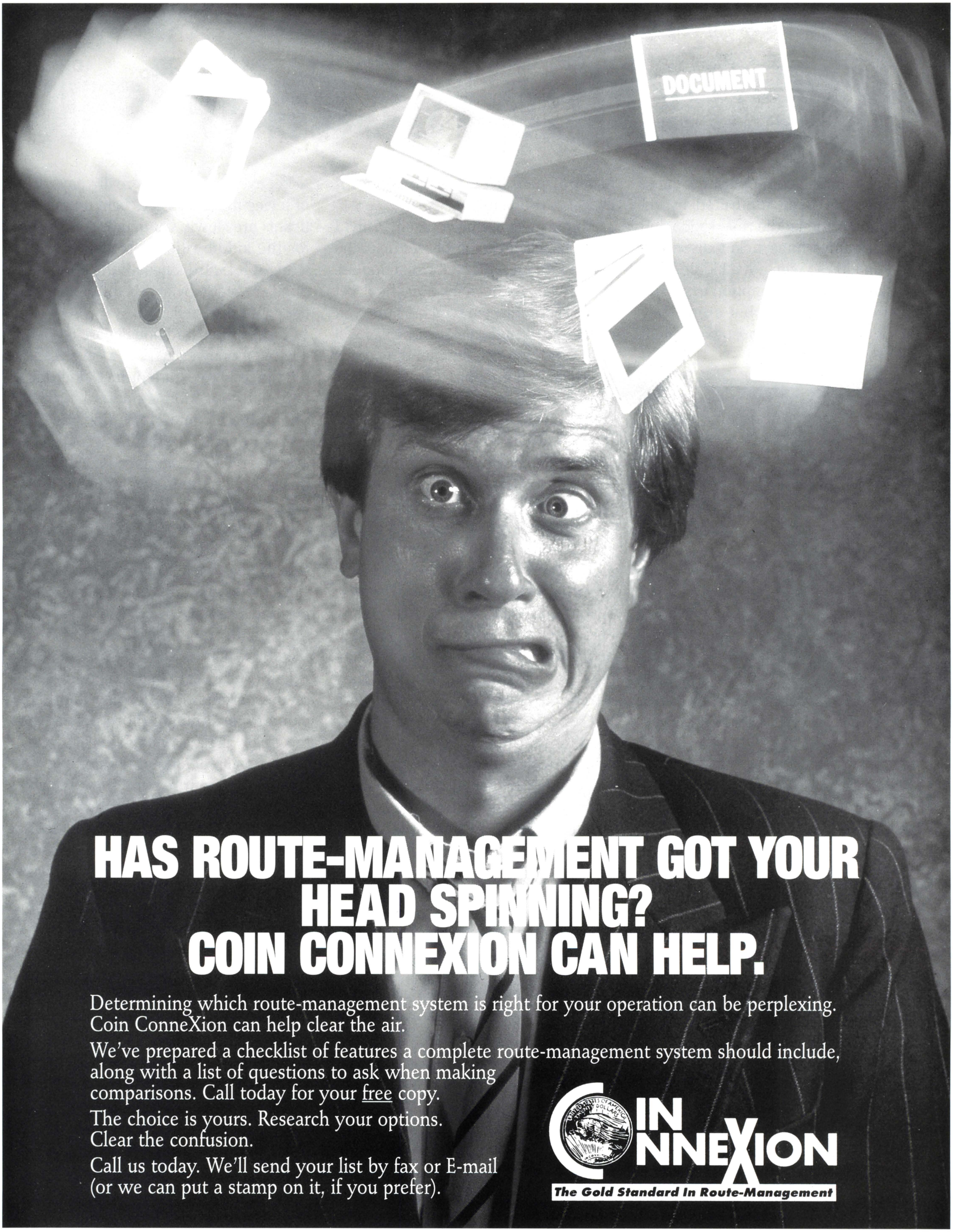
Perceived value is what a customer feels an item is worth. For example, if your customer can purchase an item in a store for $3, he will feel great if he can win enough tickets to redeem that item and spend approximately $3 in the process. Everybody wins! You win because you purchased the item at a wholesale cost of $1 (you have $2 of gross profit). The customer not only won the item but received an entertainment value also. Your mission is to search for merchandise that has a perceived value of at least three times what it cost you and that are items a customer desires.

Why is it then that many FECs have a redemption payout percent of less than 20 percent? It is very doubtful that any of you can consistently purchase items that have a perceived value of five times what you pay for them. Do you really think you are fooling your customers?

Let me pass on a very important statistic: if a customer has a good experience on a visit, that customer has a 65 percent chance of coming back again. If that same customer has an excellent experience, the chances of a repeat visit just increased to 95 percent. You can increase your repeat business by 50 percent by just putting your efforts (and money) into giving your customers a great experience. Understanding redemption and putting that understanding into practice is a quick and easy step to upgrading your FEC from good to excellent. ▲

[This article appeared in the International Association of Family Entertainment Center's (IAFEC) newsletter, Fun Extra. If you are interested in becoming a member of the association you can reach them at (914) 993-9297.]

Frank Seninsky



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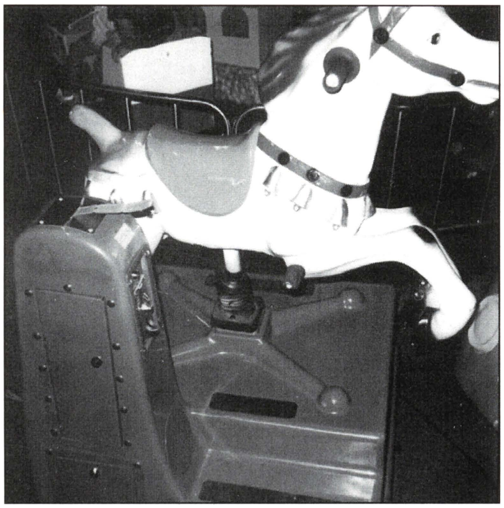
"Ticket Vic" Fortenbach

Kiddie ride redemption

One type of coin-operated game that has not been infiltrated by redemption is the kiddie ride. Video and pinball games have ticket dispenser "add on kits" so why not a kiddie ride? The kiddie ride redemption is strictly for the younger kids, but aren't they the ones that get the most excitement out of winning tickets?



The kiddie ride horse Vic equipped with a ticket dispenser

Sure, there is not any skill involved in winning tickets from a kiddie ride, besides of course, holding on! But there is an underlying concept for adding a ticket dispenser to a kiddie ride. Start the kids early on collecting and knowing what a ticket is, how much it will "buy," how to spend it, and how to save it. This is one thing they will have to learn in life whether it's money or tickets. Tickets are just like money.

Adding a ticket dispenser to a kiddie ride is not that hard. The hardest part I encountered was where to install the ticket dispenser itself. You have to keep in mind several things: will the child see the tickets in plain view when they are dispensed? This adds to the excitement for the child as well as the parents. Is there enough space inside the ride for the ticket bin? Will the ticket dispenser be easy to service if there is a problem?

You may be asking yourself, "Can't I just connect a ticket dispenser up to the kiddie ride motor?" NO! Don't do that. "Well, what about connecting the ticket dispenser to the coin switch?" Sure, you can do that, but the ticket dispenser will only vend one ticket when the coin is inserted. That's no fun.

Eletech Electronics has the solution! It sells a redemption kiddie ride controller designed to replace your bad kiddie ride controller or to update the ride for redemption. The controller has completely solid state electronics, no sound tapes to break or wear out, and it voices a special parental warning before the start of the ride. This warning is designed to alert the parents to make sure the child is holding on before the ride starts. It's a great addition since I have seen some kids almost fall of of the ride because they weren't sure when it was going to start.

Carousel style music is played for the duration of the ride. The kiddie ride controller also has two push-button inputs for special child activated sounds, a gun shot sound and a horse "whinny" sound are standard. All four sounds (the parental warning, music, and the two special sounds) can be customized to any sound you may need for your kiddie ride. The controller has adjustable ride times of 60, 90, or 120 seconds. There are eight coin settings per ride. A dip switch sets the controller for the times and the coins required to activate the ride. Since the controller is all solid-state, the audio sounds and music can be changed to any affect you many require by Eletech Electronics.

A special version of this controller has been designed to dispense tickets from a kiddie ride. The controller will activate a one pulse, one ticket style ticket dispenser every 15 seconds the ride is on. The idea of dispensing one ticket every 15 seconds really pays off in seeing the child's eyes light up as the tickets are slowly vended. Installation for the kiddie ride controller is very straight forward since all the connections are made by screw terminals on the controller itself.

Kiddie rides traditionally are not really big money earners in a game center. Since I have added the ticket dispenser to our kiddie ride horse (see photo) the income of the ride has increased over 20 percent a week. The average ticket percentage (remember this is a redemption game now) is less than 25 percent. The income from other kiddie rides has not suffered from this addition. The enticement feature is also a trick that can be used, since the kiddie ride vends four tickets per ride. We have priced our cheapest item in the redemption area at five tickets, which means the child has to ride this ride again to get more tickets or the parents have to play another game to accumulate more tickets so the child will have enough to get something at the redemption counter.

The part number for the Eletech Electronics kiddie ride controller is DM2020E1 and cost $120. This does not include the ticket dispenser. You can contact Eletech at (818) 333-6394 or more information.

If you want to take advantage of the kiddie ride redemption but do not want to convert one of your existing rides, Carousel International in Eldon, Missouri, offers two models of redemption rides—*Lil' Fire Engine* and *Kid Kop 54* patrol car. Both feature interactive push buttons, LED dash panels, attraction lights, and of course a ticket dispenser. Carousel's phone number is (314) 392-7122 if you'd like more information.

If you wish to contact me, I can be reached at VICCO Electronics, (619) 322-4000 or by e-mail TICKETVIC@AOL.com. ▲

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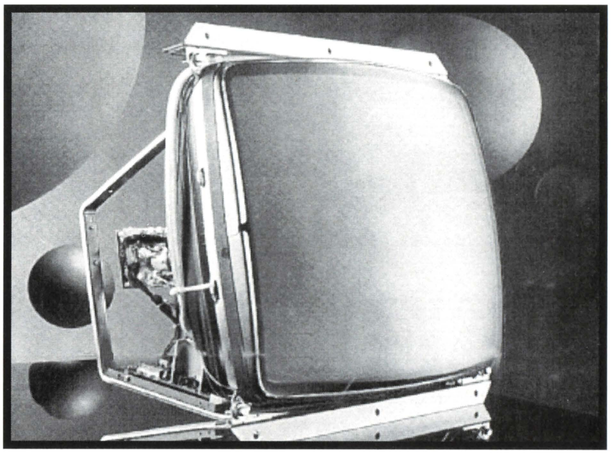

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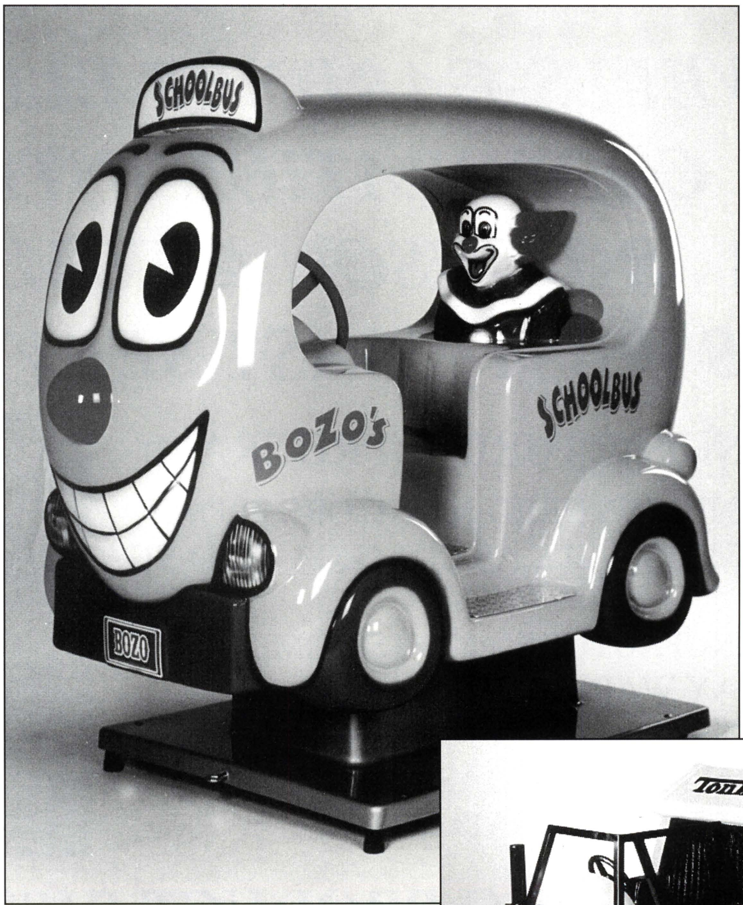
Kiddie Rides U.S.A.

finds its niche in the market

We're traveling back to the mid-'70s when pinball was king. It was making a huge change from electromechanical to solid state, and video games were just making an appearance. A company called Audiotronics was finding moderate success selling kiddie cartoon booths. It was during this time at one of the ATE shows in London, Audiotronics' representatives saw kiddie rides like they'd never seen before in the United States.



Tonka
Tonka
Tonka

Above right: *Bozo* is still the most famous clown even after 50 years.

Inset: The *Tonka* truck is the focus of a creative marketing plan between Hasbro and Kiddie Rides U.S.A.

Hydraulics and fiberglass special effects caught their attention and wouldn't let go. The company brought some of the rides over here and tested the waters in pizza restaurants. When the locations and their customers went bonkers over the new rides, the die was cast for Audiotronics. The company began importing kiddie rides from England, Italy, and Germany, and its name was changed to Kiddie Rides U.S.A. to reflect its new focus.

The evolution of the kiddie ride business has been interesting. At first kiddie rides were put on location by operators who had vending routes with no videos. In the late '70s, the advent of the themed restaurants created a new interest in kiddie rides, naturally to attract families with younger children.

Even the themed restaurants in the early days had more videos than rides, however, because operators thought return on investment was higher on videos.

Time proved them wrong. Many of those kiddie rides are still operating while video profits have plummeted.

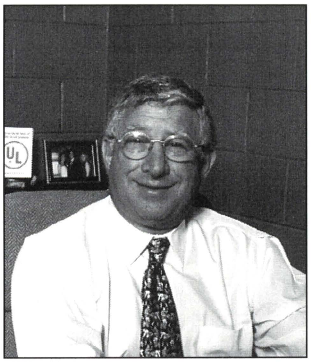
In the early '80s, Kiddie Rides U.S.A. hired Stuart Heller, a real estate developer, who was seeing real estate opportunities plummet. He stayed with Kiddie Rides U.S.A. for only a couple of years, eventually returning to the real estate market. But his short stint in the kiddie ride industry had a resounding impact on him. He says that he enjoyed the fun and the people, and when the opportunity arose in 1992 Stuart bought Kiddie Rides U.S.A. from the retiring Bob Versman.

Stuart chuckles when talking about interactive rides, a new buzzword that recently cropped up within the industry. "All of the rides we imported during the '70s and '80s were interactive. It's not a new concept, for us at least. I remember the *Scoutball* with its controlled rotation and up and down motion," Stuart noted.

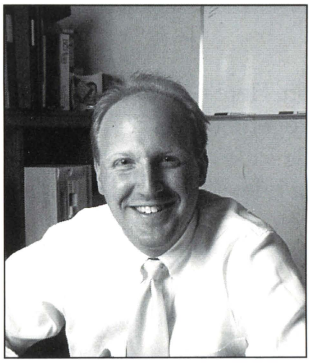
He recalls that Kiddie Rides U.S.A. was a sleepy little company with little growth during the late '80s and early '90s. It was run as a small company, and there was little interest in expanding its line. But when Stuart took over, things changed. One of the expansions took Kiddie Rides U.S.A. to a host of foreign countries. Now over 32 percent of its sales are overseas and in South America.

We asked Stuart if the growth of family entertainment centers was having an impact on kiddie rides. "It is having a positive impact on us. FECs are looking for non-typical rides. One of the biggest earners in FECs is hydraulic rides. The new electronics make them much more dependable than the older models."

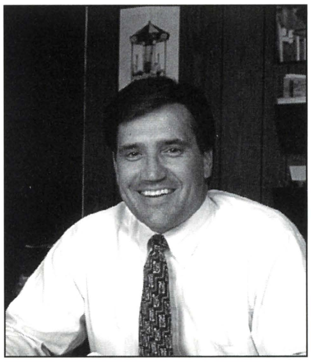
Kiddie Rides U.S.A. is also excited about the expansion into locations like malls, grocery stores, and others wanting to attract families. But the themed restaurant locations are dwindling, said Stuart. "There aren't as many themed restaurants anymore because Chuck E. Cheese and Discovery Zone control that market. We're finding our growth more in other types of retail locations."



Stuart Heller
President



Robert Cohn
Vice president of finance



Michael Evans
Vice president of operations

Joe DeMarsico
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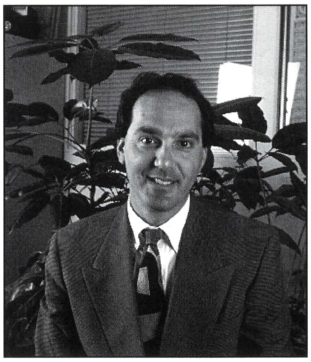


Brian Carasik
Special projects/projects coordinator

Nancy Burgener
Secretary/treasurer

Licensed rides

An area where Stuart has seen the biggest change is in licensed product. "Kiddie rides once were touted as having a life span of about nine years and we saw some pushing that to 15 years. Licensed rides are forcing operators to give their customers more current offerings. It's good for operators because they can expect to increase their earnings, it's good for the location because the player appeal keeps customers happy, and it's good for the customers because their kids are experiencing more fun than ever."

Stuart tells us that not only are licensed rides opening doors for new locations, the promotional tie-in opportunities are unparalleled to anything kiddie rides have been exposed to before. These tie-ins with top name companies also add a layer of credibility. A striking example is the tie-in Kiddie Rides U.S.A. is currently doing with Hasbro toys, manufacturer of Tonka toys among others.

Hasbro's general manager Pete Kelly sent a letter to all of the company's retailers hyping the *Tonka* coin-operated kiddie ride produced by Kiddie Rides U.S.A. It's quite an impressive letter along with a fact sheet outlining the promotion. Here's an excerpt from the letter: "Together with Hasbro Toy Group, Kiddie Rides U.S.A. is ready to place a *Tonka* ride at every retail outlet across the country. Hasbro plans on supporting this endeavor with a full line of exclusive retailer promotional programs aimed an increasing in-store traffic and sales volume. The *Tonka* coin-operated ride serves as a value added product from which moms and dads can receive coupons, sweepstakes chances, rebates, and a host of other possibilities only limited to the imagination."

Stuart notes that this tie-in affords the opportunity of combining the forces of a multimillion dollar advertising budget to promote the *Tonka* ride. He added that redemption centers that handle the Hasbro line can benefit from this promotion as well.

Valuable advice

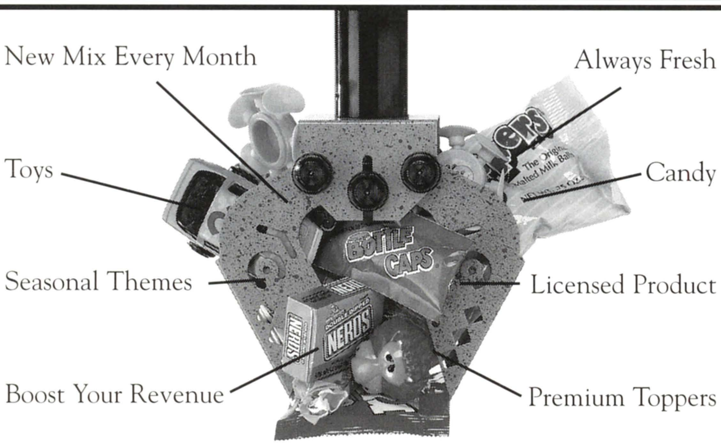
Stuart knows that it's not easy for operators to add new product line, but notes that kiddie rides are a great value. He also gave us some helpful hints to pass on about what any operator should know about operating kiddie rides.

"First and foremost is to know who you are dealing with," he began. "Operators should not be shy about asking questions about any kiddie ride manufacturer they're thinking of doing business with. One example of a question you may not think to ask is, does he carry insurance? Insurance is becoming a much bigger issue, and it's expensive (up to $50,000 per year) for a manufacturer to carry product liability. And while you're asking questions, ask for references."

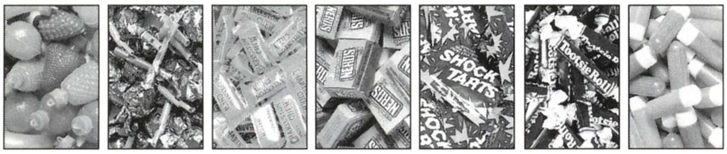
Stuart continued, "Here are a few other things you'll want to know: How easy will it be to place the rides? What kind of return can I expect on my investment? Does the manufacturer offer any financing options? Will the manufacturer stand behind his product? And will the company be around long enough to answer all these questions?"

Stuart added, "Kiddie ride operators will be making choices that will affect the market for years to come. The alliances with multimillion dollar companies will make products easier to recognize. But operators need to be cautious about investing in flash-in-the-pan licenses. We've been making *Bozo* rides and even 50 years later Bozo is still the most widely recognized clown. That's why we are so happy to be working with Hasbro. The Tonka truck has been around for 50 years and kids still love them."

He added, "Operators need to run their kiddie ride business like a business. That means updating and rotating rides, replacing them, and paying attention to locations. I saw an operator in Canada go from operating no rides to over 200. How? He simply went to locations and saw the outdated, non-working junk and offered to replace it. I'll close with these words: if you don't take care of your business, someone else will step right in." ▲



CANDY CRANE MIXES



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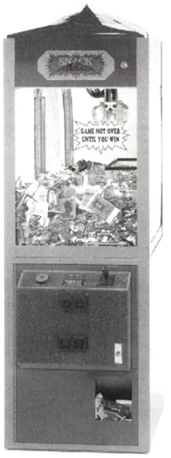

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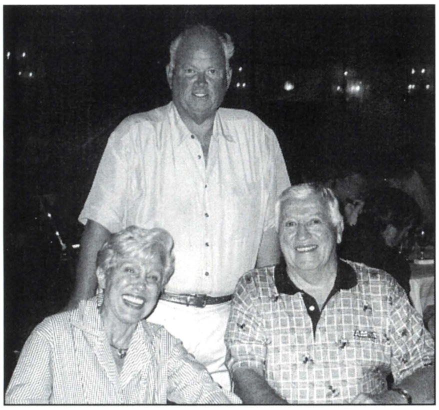
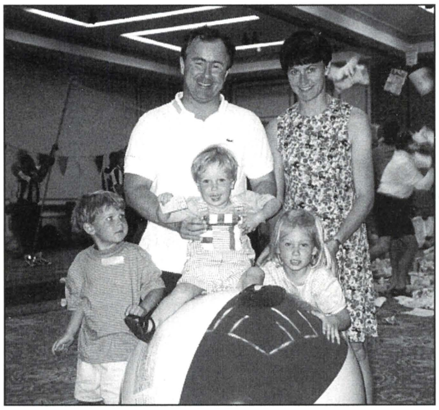


Having dinner at Castle Harbour, (l-r): Jerry Nims, Shane Breaks of Namco, and Bob Nims of AMA Distributing.



The Hayes family enjoying the Beach Olympics.

Barnes Longacre with Ira Bettelman of C.A. Robinson.

Ago Mensah of Ago's Intl. Distributing (l) with Aldo Andreu of James Industries and his wife Zeida.

Phyllis and Rubin Franco of Franco Distributing.

Since 1955 Namco has been providing high-level play experiences for consumers worldwide. With an eye toward continuing that trend into the next century, the company held its first international business meeting last month on the island of Bermuda.

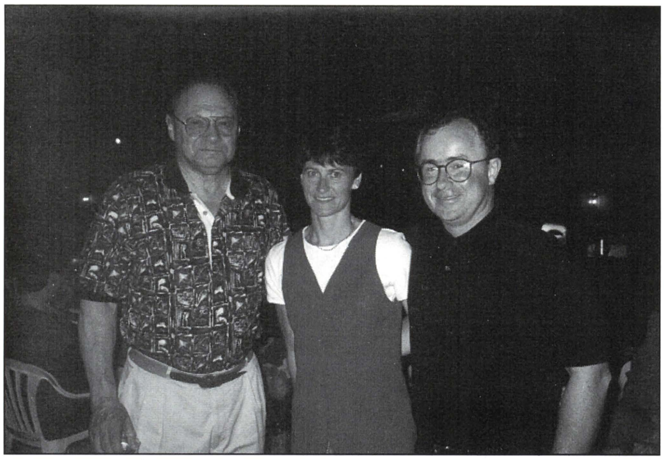
Distributors traveled from the four corners of the globe to attend the meeting, where they got a preview of what's in store for the year 2000 and beyond.

"Namco's guiding philosophy has three pillars," said company founder, chairman, and CEO Masaya Nakamura. "The first is a view expressed by a Dutch historian, Johan Huizinga, who said ‘to play is human.’ Huizinga's farsighted view has given us the courage and inspiration to adopt play as our occupation.

"The second is an expression of belief by a French philosopher, Andre' Malraux, who stated that the 21st century would be an era of spirituality. The prophecy by Malraux has held true as we continue to see the transition of human desires from materialistic to spiritual desires. This transition provides us with unlimited possibilities in the 21st century. Built on the foundation of the first two pillars is our third pillar, Namco's strategic economic theory, which professes that greater added values are attained as industry advances to a higher level of industrialization."

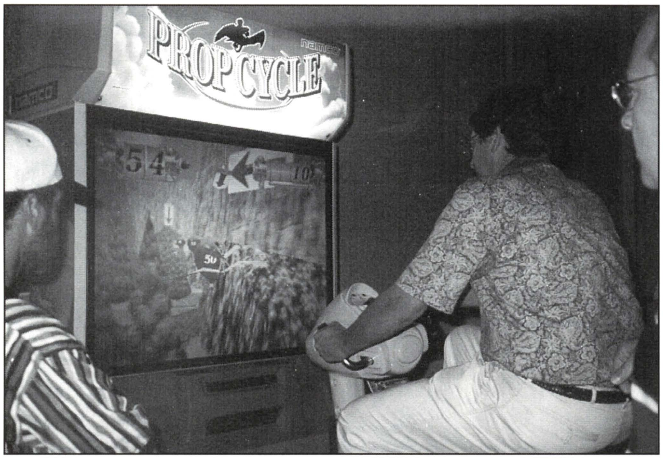
Nakamura, who founded the com-

"Namco's guiding philosophy has three pillars. The first is a view expressed by a Dutch historian, Johan Huizinga, who said to play is human.'"



Jerry Marcus of Atlas Distributing with Namco's Kevin Hayes and his wife Anne.

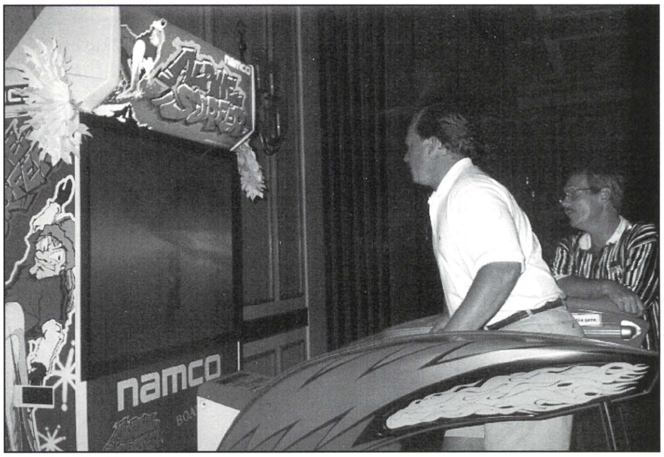
The Warehouse of Games crew, (l-r): Larry and Bobbi Potashnick and Alyssa and Barry Schraier.



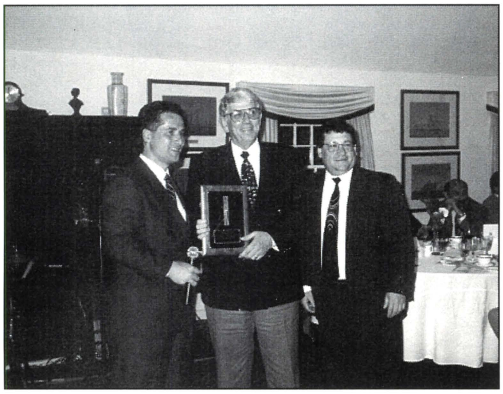
Marc Haim of R.H. Belam riding *Prop Cycle*.

At the welcome reception, (l-r): Mark Singer of Central Distributing with girlfriend Jill Schrier, and David Capilouto of Greater Southern with wife Susan.

At the awards banquet, (l-r): Marc and Karen Haim of R.H. Belam and Jim and Janice Niblock of Canadian Coin Machine Distributing.



Craig Cohoon of Moss Distributing checks out *Alpine Surfer*.



"Before the end of this year, we will be able to provide to the amusement industry a revolutionary topic. Please hold your breath."

pany in 1955 to operate rocking-horse rides on the roof of a department store in Yokohama, said Namco put these pillars into action by providing not only the most high-tech but high-touch entertainment products offering the ultimate in interactivity. Nakamura also hinted at more to come.

"Namco is making preparations to enter a new entertainment business which makes extensive use of computer graphics," Nakamura said. "I can say now that before the end of this year, we will be able to provide to the amusement industry a revolutionary topic. Please hold your breath."

Nakamura's speech came at the business meeting, which also featured a movie, "Namco: The Ultimate in Entertainment," detailing the history of the company from its humble beginnings to its current status as a fully integrated entity involved in research and development; the manufacture and sales of coin-op games, simulator machines, and consumer game software; and the operation of one of the largest chains of amusement arcades worldwide.

The business meeting also saw the introduction of three new products. The first, *Alpine Surfer*, will be available in July. Capitalizing on the success of its previous hit, *Alpine Racer*, this simulator gives players the opportunity to experience snow-boarding courtesy of Namco's Super System 22.

Also part of the company's High Touch simulator line, *Prop Cycles* incorporates the latest in high-tech graphics and player involvement. The game simulates the hang-gliding/ultra-light flying experience. A bike mechanism situated in the 50" cabinet offers both rolling and pitching to amplify the overall flying experience, and pedal controls manipulate the speed, while handle controls determine the direction. (For more on *Prop Cycles* see "What's New"). Completing the game unveiling was the video kit *Soul Edge: Version 2*, continuing the company's tradition of successful fighting games with new moves, new characters, and a new time attack mode.

However, heeding their own philosophy, the gang at Namco made sure to mix plenty of play in with their work. The schedule of events included three golf outings, a beach party and cocktail cruise at Castle Harbor, a guided tour of St. George by glass-bottom boat, horseback riding, snorkeling, and a shopping trip to Hamilton.

Closing out the four-day event was an awards banquet held at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club. Distributor of the Year awards went Betson Enterprises for the eastern United States and Southgate Amusement for the western end of the country. Taking international honors was Leisure & Allied Industries of Australia. ▲

From top left: Namco staff hosted distributors from around the world at its first international meeting; Malcolm Steinberg (c) of Leisure & Allied Industries accepted the award for international distributor of the year from Namco's Frank Cosentino (l) and Emilio Cabrera; The Bermuda Banana Yellow Bellies won the rained-outed Beach Olympics, which were held in the ballroom; Winning distributor of the year for the eastern region was Betson Enterprises, (l-r): Peter Betti of Betson, Frank Cosentino of Namco, Bob Boals of Betson, AAMA president Rick Kirby, and Tom Siemieniec of Namco.

3Dfx Interactive takes a step into the future of video games

BY VALERIE COGNEVICH

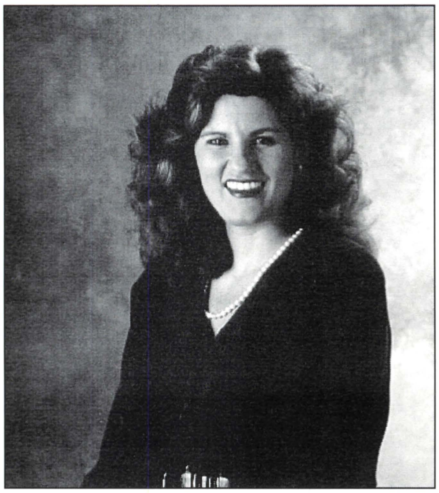
The name itself is enough to conjure up images of something special. And 3Dfx won't disappoint. What you will see is a game that has more excitement and superior graphics than you've ever seen. Perhaps we could lift a slogan from a popular TV commercial by saying "3Dfx doesn't make the games, it makes the games better."

The obvious question is "who are these people and what are they doing in the coin-op industry?" 3Dfx is a Silicon Valley startup company formed a year ago by some men with impressive credentials in graphics technology. They came from companies like Intel, Silicon Graphics, Apple Computer, and Media Vision. Need we say more?

The dream was to bring the look, feel, and realism seen on very high end graphics products (with the just as high price tags) to an affordable level by using some of the techniques they'd learned and new technology they had access to.

As the business plan developed, it became apparent to them that there was an important business dynamic with entertainment products. They envisioned bridging the coin-op and the home worlds.

Vice president of marketing Andy Keane explains, "We make an analogy with movies. Good movies, and even some really bad movies, roll out first in theaters which are the premium locations. After the theater run, movies are deployed in video stores and then to television. At each of these cycles the movies make money."



Kristin Montgomery, manager of business development and a familiar name from coin-op

He continued, "We envision that coin-op provides the premium locations. Then a game can be deployed into the home and make a profit in that environment. When a company is ready to introduce a game from coin-op into the home there's no need for that company to reinvest money into the same title. We provide an avenue for gaining more revenue from a title."

> **"The dream was to bring the look, feel, and realism seen on very high end graphics products (with the just as high price tags) to an affordable level."**

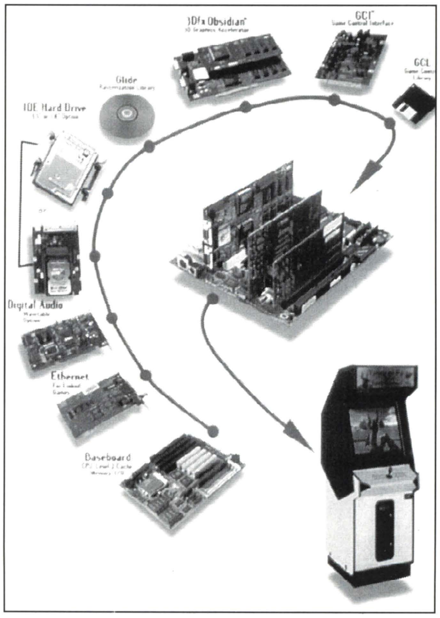
Opportunities in 3-D

3Dfx Interactive has created Voodoo Graphics, a chipset that can be used by a number of manufacturers for next-generation game development. Voodoo Graphics brings a new level of 3-D photo realism and real-time performance to the coin-op market. In April, 3Dfx Interactive announced a strategic relationship with Williams Electronics and Midway Mfg., makers of the wildly successful *Mortal Kombat* series.

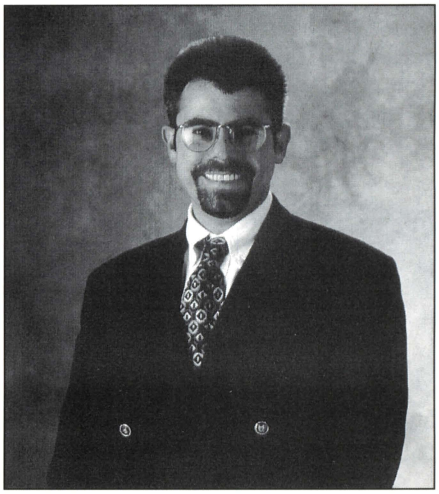
"Williams' tradition of producing hot games, combined with Voodoo Graphics' explosive 3-D realism and performance will result in the ultimate 3-D game experience. This strategic relationship clearly demonstrates the ability of 3Dfx's 3-D technology to span both the PC and coin-op markets," said Kristin Montgomery, entertainment markets sales manager.

3Dfx feels that its technology will give players a high end experience with spectacular special effects and a more visually exciting experience than they are used to seeing in the home version of the game, but expect in the arcade. However, as Keane explained, the experience of the home and coin-op game will be identical.

"Williams chose Voodoo Graphics because of its superior technology and performance. By using 3Dfx technology, Williams will be able to accelerate game development, dramatically improving the performance and realism for the gamer," said Ken Fedesna, vice president and general manager at Williams. "Williams will set the standard for the next generation of 3-D coin-op games and then bring that experience home."



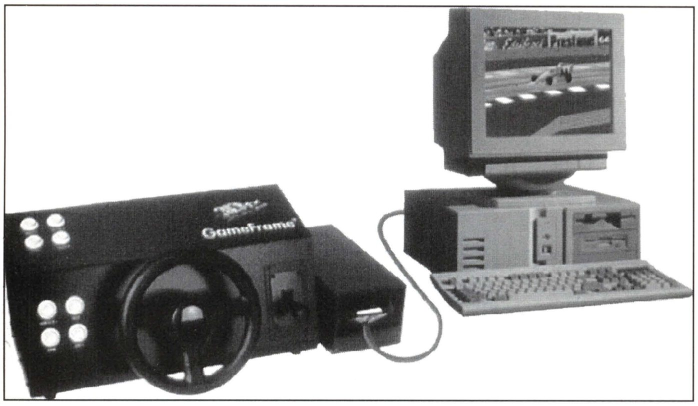
The System 3-D solution



Ross Smith, founder and vice president of sales and marketing

3Dfx Interactive introduced Voodoo Graphics last November. With texture-mapped graphics performance exceeding one million triangles per second, Voodoo Graphics will enable a new class of photo-realistic and highly interactive 3-D games for both coin-op and PC game markets. Voodoo Graphics offers advanced capabilities and performance well beyond the elementary 3-D technology found in commodity Windows and multimedia accelerators. Voodoo Graphics' advanced features dramatically enhance visual quality and accuracy without sacrificing performance. Voodoo Graphics extends beyond 3-D rendering to include radical special effects that create a truly unique gaming experience.

"We have created an engine that allows manufacturers to focus their energy and expertise on developing games without getting hung up on



Gameframe GCI

the technology that runs the games," Keane said.

The industry has seen many examples of high end technology but a lousy game. The reverse is also true; we've seen exciting games run on lousy hardware. 3Dfx is working to see that great games have great hardware for exciting game play and player appeal.

The cost of developing hardware of this type is astronomical. 3Dfx estimates it spent about $5 million in its first year developing and perfecting the graphics engine. Although it's a lot for a graphic chip set, Keane puts it in perspective: "Yes, it's a lot of money, but by amortizing the cost over several manufacturers, no one is at a disadvantage."

The 3Dfx system works on a PCI bus which is a generic connection inside a computer from the graphics side to the CPU side. 3Dfx provides the graphics side. Some companies using this system may opt to use an actual PC or some will choose custom engineering. It depends on the business goal of the company.

The advantage to the manufacturer using this system is that it's visually realistic and translates into a high impact product. Said Keane, "People get hung up on the technology. They wonder whether A is better than B. We have simply created a chip set that takes that speculation out of game design. The most important talent developers bring to the market is great games.

The first coin-op games utilizing the 3Dfx system are due out during the early part of the summer. The company showed some early versions of home titles at the Computer Game Developers Conference recently and you'll see those out sometime during the summer, too.

We asked Keane what operators should know about 3Dfx. Here's what he had to say: "We've heard that players are getting increasingly demanding and spoiled for high end entertainment. Perhaps it's the movies and the coverage the computer companies have generated. But when people go into an arcade they expect a visually stimulating experience. What operators should know is that there's some hot stuff coming out that will grab people's attention and satisfy their demands for a stimulating experience. We're going to draw people back into the arcades! ▲

3Dfx
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Voodoo graphics, the name of the chip set

The 3Dfx team

CORPORATE

Gordon Campbell, founder, chairman, and CEO *Founder of Seeq, Chips and Technologies, Techfarm*

Ross Smith, founder, vice president sales and marketing *Experience at Ford Aerospace, MIPS, Silicon Graphics, Pellucid, Media Vision*

Gary Martin, founder, vice president administration and CFO *Experience at Apple Computer (its first controller), Chips and Technologies*

Alma Ribbs, director of marketing *Experience at GRID, Sun Microsystems, MIPS*

Debbie Chen, director of developer relations *Experience at Silicon Graphics, IBM*

Andy Keane, vice president of marketing *Experience at MIPS, Silicon Graphics, Intel, Philips*

Kristin Montgomery, coin-op business development *Experience at Data East, Sega, Quick Silver*

TECHNICAL

Gary Tarolli, vice president and chief scientist *Experience at DEC, Silicon Graphics, Pellucid, Media Vision, Kubota Graphics*

Scott Sellers, vice president research and development *Experience at Silicon Graphics, Pellucid, Media Vision*

Janet Leising, director of software engineering *Experience at Evans & Sutherland, Kubota, Weitek*

Murali Sundaresan, 3-D graphics architect *Experience at Intel*

Charles Fox, director of manufacturing *Experience at Video Seven, VLSI, Media Vision*

Lou Singer

"Remember me when I am gone away
Gone far away into the silent land.
But better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad."
– Christina Rossetti

Lou and Harriett during ACME '87 in New Orleans.

Lou Singer was what the coin-op industry is all about. He began his career in 1946 and loved it to the end. He took a job at Central Distributing after serving in World War II, became a partner in the company, and then went on to buy out his partner. He was a fixture in the coin-op industry. With his wife Harriett and son Mark, not a show went by that you didn't see him traveling the aisles barely going two feet before being stopped by friend after friend.

Those friends were saddened to hear of Lou's death on May 15, the day after his 74th birthday. The night before, Lou and Harriett spent a quiet evening at home, having dinner and watching a movie. The two had already made plans for the Memorial Day weekend.

Although Lou had leukemia for a number of years, it never slowed him down. In fact, one of the last times many saw him was at the ACME show in Orlando in March. He was already making plans to attend the Salex show in July.

Gordon Smart, who said Lou "guided, fathered, and nurtured" them when he and son Jeff Smart got into the coin-op business in 1973, lamented that Lou just wasn't ready to die. "You know some people who sense it's their time and are ready to go. Lou still had a lot of things left to do."

Joel Kleiman of Pioneer agreed, "We've expected it, but it was so quick."

Gordon remembers Lou as a hardworker: "I think a 70-hour week for Lou was considered semi-retirement! After the war, he was working for Central and building houses in California. He'd work all week in Omaha, then fly to California for the weekend. He was a definite workaholic and was until the end."

Friend Bob LeBlanc, who met Lou in the late '60s recalls his first encounter with Lou: "I was working for Si Redd at the time. Si sent me to Omaha and when I got there it was a Sunday. Nothing, and I mean nothing, was open, not even a restaurant, let alone a place to get a drink. Lou brought me to his club, where he had a stash in a locker–anything you'd want. We became fast friends after that!"

Another friend, Pete Entringer of Audio Visual Amusements, credits Lou as being responsible for Pete going into business for himself around 1975. "Lou has been my mentor ever since. He was a shrewd businessman, but he had a heart of gold. Anyone who touched his life was better off for it."

Rubin Franco of Franco Distributing, who knew Lou for over 35 years, remembers Lou's industry network: "Lou knew things in this industry BEFORE they happened! You could never tell him anything; he already knew. He really knew everything about this industry. I'll miss talking with him."

Lou is survived by his wife Harriett, who along with Lou attended Nebraska State University and remained fast Cornhusker fans; son Mark, who is president of Central; daughter Sandy Kutler, a psychologist; and two granddaughters, Allison and Tracy Kutler.

Lou was proud of his family and every one of the friends we talked with said he lived for his family. Granddaughter Allison worked on President Clinton's staff for Ron Brown, who recently died in a tragic airplane crash in Bosnia; and his other granddaughter Tracy attends college.

In lieu of flowers, Lou's family has asked that he be remembered through the Leukemia Foundation or the Rose Blumpkin Jewish Home in Omaha, Neb. ▲

by Bonnie Theard

Island paradise is setting for HAWAIIAN BRIAN'S

Not far from the exceptional beaches of Waikiki in Honolulu, on the island of Oahu, is another tropical respite from the busy everyday world—Hawaiian Brian's Billiards game center.

The 21,400-square-foot facility on Kapiolani Blvd. houses a game area with 65 of the most current videos, 10 pinballs, three cranes, three foosball tables, one CD jukebox, 39 pool tables, and a 1,200-square-foot pro shop where the serious pool player can find Hawaiian Brian's T-shirts, custom cues and cases, and even a special issue poster-size calendar.

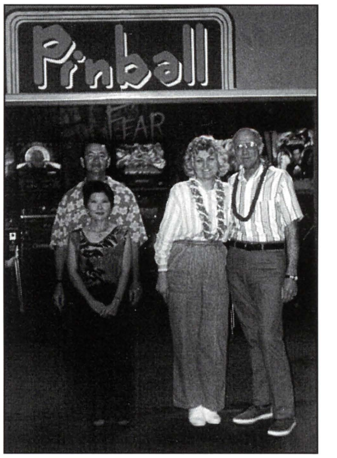
In addition, a separate snack area features vending machines that offer everything from cold drinks and fruit juices to chips, candy, sandwiches, and good coffee. The island of Kauai and the big island of Hawaii are significant producers of quality coffee.

The center is open 24 hours a day and is located in an area that is best described as a "happening place" on weekend nights near the entrance to Waikiki and the biggest shopping mall, Ala Moana.

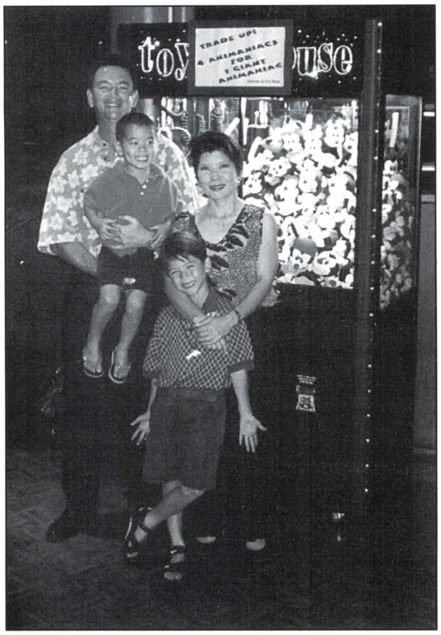
Hawaiian Brian's, which opened in 1990, is owned and operated by Microworlds Inc. of Aiea. Partners Glenn Anderson and Richard Akimoto handle the day-to-day operations of coin-operated equipment and billiards, respectively. The center is named for real-life billiard pro Brian Hashimoto, who lends his name to the establishment and is also involved in the business.

Anderson is a familiar face to attendees at all major industry events. A member of the AMOA board of directors, he also chairs the membership committee of the association. He is clearly visible at seminars and on the exhibit floor striving to keep up with equipment and trends.

Casual and serious pool players and video game enthusiasts can find what they are looking for at a well-run game center that operates on the basic principle of providing the best entertainment value.



Glenn and Violet Anderson (l) and Harold and Bonnie Theard by the pinball room where 10 of the latest flippers are housed.



The Anderson family, (l-r): Glenn (holding nephew Jason), Violet, and son Lee by the *Toy House* crane filled with Animaniacs characters.

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Three *Tornado 2000* foosball tables round out the sports games.

TOKENS
CHANGE
CHANGE
M3K
EXIT

Employee Manny Pasion is the creative mind behind the colorful specialty signs at Hawaiian Brian's.

Since Hawaii is about a four-hour flight from the West Coast, and a seven- to nine-hour flight from the rest of the mainland, all that travelling back and forth requires a commitment on Anderson's part. When asked about the time that it takes to stay current, Anderson responds, "When you live on an island, all you know is the island."

He travels so much that on his vacation he stays home. "Travel is inhumane," he says, "but when I come back I am always excited about a new idea and glad I spent time with my friends in the industry."

Anderson and Akimoto have been in the amusement business since 1985. In addition to constantly updating Hawaiian Brain's, they also supply equipment to local bowling centers. Games are moved every three months to keep Hawaiian Brian's looking fresh and appealing. The newest games are placed there first and then brought down the line to other locations.

One of the things that stands out at Hawaiian Brain's is the signage. Employee Manny Pasion makes them by hand to help patrons find popular games or direct them to the nearest token machine.

Special care has also been taken in the billiard area where separate sections are set aside for both casual and serious players. Tables are as likely to be clad in red or blue felt as the traditional green. Movie theater seats line the perimeter of the area and upholstered benches in between the tables afford ample room to rest between matches.

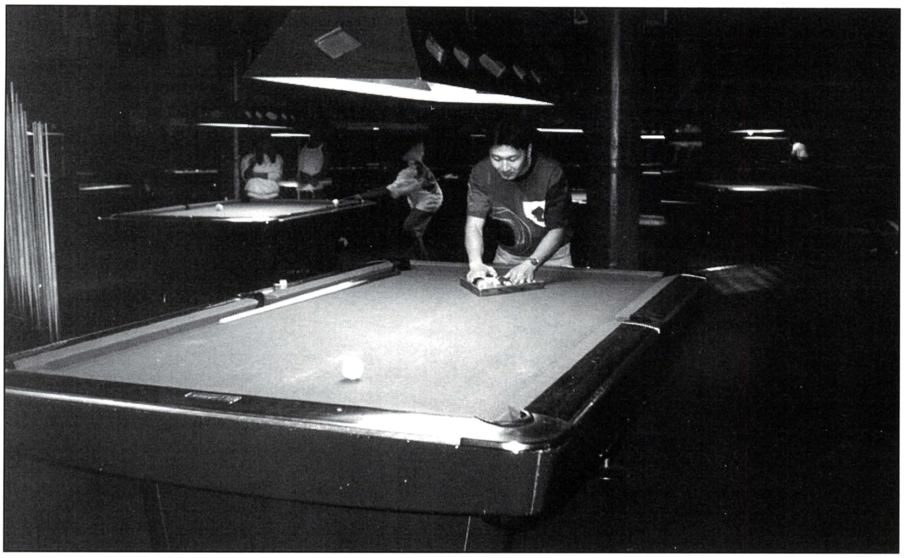
Old advertising signs from Alaska's The Son of River City Billiard Room decorate the walls and add character.

Pinballs occupy a side room, which may be changing soon. "To maximize pinballs you need someone to be a technician just for flippers," says Anderson. "You have to work hard to make pinballs be successful."

Anderson is considering reducing the number of pinballs and adding redemption. It's not a decision he takes lightly. "It's a big step," he explains. "I started first with three cranes to see how customers responded. We adopted a trade-up program so players could obtain larger plush prizes. I'm encouraged to go forward with redemption, possibly putting the redemption counter near the pro shop."

"The major chains are compiling ideas and systems but we are isolated. As operators, what we really need is to form some alliances."

Working toward that goal, Anderson has become an avid reader of all things pertaining to redemption, as



A player sets a rack of balls on one of the 39 pool tables at Hawaiian Brian's.

Les Fujimoto (l) and general manager Dwayne Arakawa get a set of billiard balls ready for a customer.

Microworlds staff after a regular weekly meeting, (l-r): Dennis Yoshimura, Kevin Yoshimura, Hernando Andres, Rodney Akiona, Calvin Silva, Joseph Tramontano, Glenn Anderson, Lois Wise, Sabrina Umetsu, Tanya Kaawa, and Sandi Asamura.

Regular player Eric Soo (c) stops by the Pro Shop to pick up a plush tiger put aside for safekeeping by Aaron Agustin.

well as a fixture at redemption seminars. "I know more about redemption than any person who doesn't do it," he quips. Doing thorough research is normal procedure for Anderson.

"We're really close," he says, "What's holding me up is getting the merchandise. The equipment is fairly easy to pick out, but it's more difficult to select a good starting package of prizes. In my ongoing research I've seen uninteresting redemption counters and very interesting redemption counters. The most successful ones are filled with desirable, well-showcased merchandise. It looks like a lot of work. Those well-designed counters are the exception, not the rule."

With over a decade of industry experience, what does he think about conditions in the industry today. Are we hearing too much doom and gloom?

"There are a lot of good reasons for operators to be concerned," he answers. "There are a lot of challenges, fewer manufacturers, rising game costs, and a shrinking customer base. We either have to fight it out or get out of the business. If we don't try anything we definitely will go out of business.

"I think it is a good time to look at our trade association and try to affiliate with operators from across the United States who are not competing with us locally, but with whom we can exchange ideas that will help us be competitive with the major chains. They are compiling ideas and systems but we are isolated. As operators, what we really need is to form some alliances."

How has Microworlds managed to thrive and be successful in these changing times? Anderson put it this way: "It's an ongoing desire to collect new ideas, listen to other people, take ideas from within the industry as well as ideas from outside our industry, and give the customers the best value for their entertainment dollar." ▲

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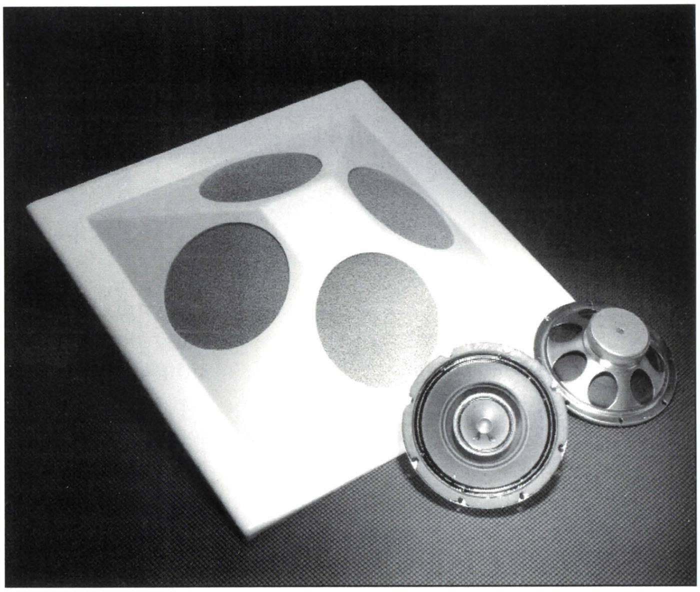

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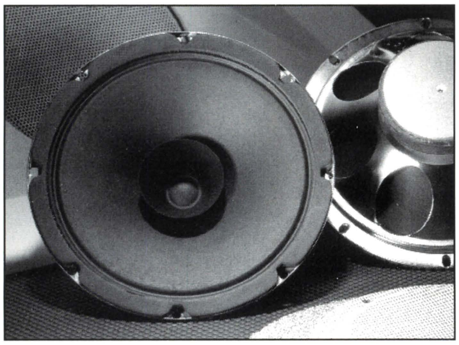

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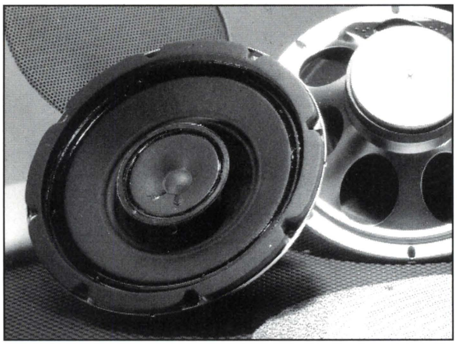

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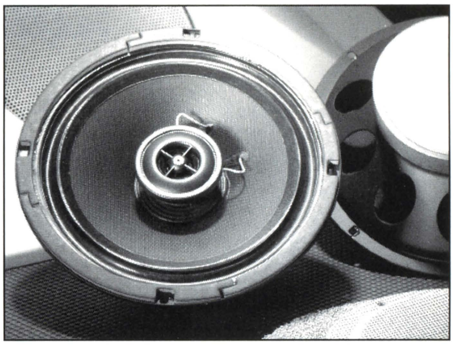

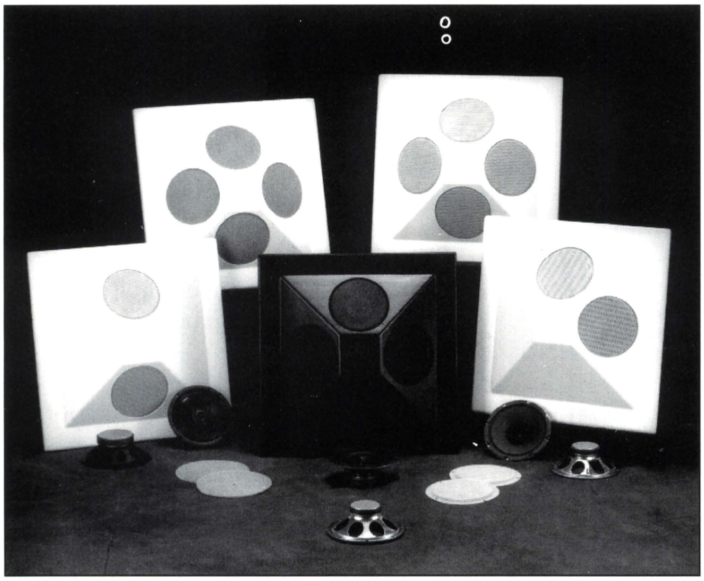

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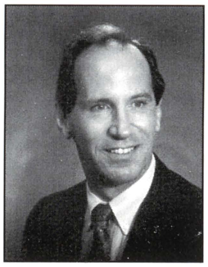

The Wylie Irwin story

How one courageous operator reformed the law

Tom Fricke

Pennsylvania's law of criminal gambling is unique. It prohibits the possession and use of "gambling devices," but there is not a word in the statute to tell you what a "gambling device" is. The statute doesn't even tell you what "gambling" is.

In Pennsylvania, the definition of the crime of unlawful gambling is left entirely to the courts. In Pennsylvania, when you look up the crime of gambling in the statute book, you have less than 100 lines of text, prohibiting bookmaking, pool selling, lotteries, and gambling devices. You can literally read the entire law in one minute flat.

The text of the gambling section is followed by page after page of one-paragraph summaries of opinions of the courts of Pennsylvania, which serve as precedent as to how this crime with no definition is to be applied to a never-ending variety of fact situations. It can take weeks for a good lawyer to read through enough of these opinions to gain an understanding of what is—or may be—criminal gambling in Pennsylvania.

Wylie and Diana Irwin

With no definition in the statute, the courts of Pennsylvania have enjoyed the freedom to formulate a definition on a case-by-case basis, and in doing so, to consider as a basis for their decisions what the public policy about gambling should be. As a result, some ground breaking decisions on gambling and amusement have come out of the courts of Pennsylvania. These decisions have often served as examples for the courts of other jurisdictions.

Generations ago, when pinball was new, all jurisdictions had to cope with the questions of whether pinball machines were gambling devices because of the award of free games. In most states, the rationale used by the courts was simple, and it resulted for a time in the prohibition of pinball!

The thinking was that criminal gambling was any game of chance which involved the award of anything of value. (Remember, the first pinball machines did not have flippers. There was usually no dispute about these being games of chance.) The operators' argument was that the mere award of a free game was not the kind of value which the legislature had in mind. Most of the time, the courts did not buy this argument. Instead, they reasoned that a free game was value, because a game of pinball was an entertainment service for which people were willing to pay.

This was not the rule in Pennsylvania, however, A case concerning pinball came up for decision by the Pennsylvania Superior Court in 1943. The Superior Court did not have to apply a formula set out in a statute. Instead, it was free to make its decision by answering this policy question: "Is a free game award the kind of harmful incentive that should be prohibited as gambling?" No, said the Superior Court of Pennsylvania: "....if the player cannot get any other...reward from the play except the right to play again, his incentive for playing must be a recreational and amusement incentive only."

This permissive precedent was the law in Pennsylvania when video poker machines first reached the market. Not surprisingly, a case about video poker quickly made its way to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. The devices involved in the case were equipped with a switch used to cancel free games and with a meter to record the number of free games cancelled. Free games were OK in Pennsylvania so these poker machines were OK too, argued the operators. Not so, said the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. It reasoned that a gambling device is either (1) something which is in fact used for gambling with proof of gambling required to obtain a conviction or forfeiture, or (2) without actual proof of gambling activity, a device which can be used for no purpose other than gambling.

In the case before it, there was no proof of actual gambling use, so the Pennsylvania Supreme Court turned to the question, "Why do people use these devices?" The court decided that the knockoff switch was necessary to the practice of awarding cash payoffs, and that payoffs created an incentive to play based on monetary return and not mere recreation. (The case was based on separate seizures of poker and blackjack machines. The seizures had occurred in 1980. The operators in Pennsylvania did not know for sure what they were allowed to do with video poker and video blackjack until the Supreme Court issued its opinion in September 1983.)

Wylie Irwin did not know any of this law or background in 1986 when he came to Pennsylvania. We use the term "industry vet" often enough, but did you ever stop to think of the different meanings that the term can have? A "veteran" can mean someone who has been in the service for awhile. It can also mean someone who has been in battle—and survived. Both meanings apply to Wylie.

Wylie has been in the business since 1963: first in traveling shows and then in arcades at the Jersey shore. In 1986, he began operating an FEC in Pennsylvania under the trade name, Side Show Pizza. This was a substantial undertaking. The one Side Show Pizza location represents an investment of well over $1 million.

In selecting his equipment, Wylie tried to do everything right. He wasn't familiar with the hundreds of gambling device precedents that make up the law of Pennsylvania but he knew well the clear and sensible regulations on coin-op redemption that applied to the operators at the Jersey shore. These rules let you operate games of chance, but the prizes are limited, the locations are limited (and must be licensed), and, most important, each game approved by the state has conduct rules intended to insure fairness to the player. If these rules make sense in New Jersey, surely (he thought) they would also make sense in Pennsylvania.

The rules did indeed make sense to the local prosecutor and local law enforcement with whom Wylie consulted. Based on this consultation, Wylie was able to operate a pusher (with the "house holes" closed) and video blackjack machines at his Side Show Pizza location. The key guideline which he followed was a limitation on the redemption value awarded from any one game. The value was always less than the customer had paid to play. (Not enough value for the player, you say? Well, maybe not enough for other locations. However, Side Show Pizza is a popular spot, and that popularity speaks for itself.)

The peace ended in 1991. The Pennsylvania State Police had their own view on pushers and video blackjack. They did not agree with the local prosecutor with whom Wylie had consulted. To the State Police, chance governed the play of games and the merchandise awards meant that the "free game" rule for pinball did not apply.

To the State Police, it didn't matter that the customer couldn't win more than he had paid to play. Sometimes the customer might win very little or nothing. Other times the customer might really score and get almost all of his money back in redemption value. Chance played a role. This had usually been enough to prove a gambling device case in other states. But this was Pennsylvania.

Wylie and Diana Irwin soon found themselves in court, defending their right to own and use their pusher and blackjack machines. They lost at the trial level. They appealed to the Superior Court and lost there too. After more than two years following the date on which the whole thing started, tens of

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thousands of dollars spent for legal defense and tens of thousands more lost in sales, not to mention many harrowing moments, Wylie and Diana finally got their chance to argue the matter before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. They made the same argument that they had since coming to Pennsylvania six years before. "If the customer can't win more than he pays, then there is no profit incentive for the customer. Without a profit incentive for the customer, it isn't gambling. It's recreation."

In its opinion, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania said in effect, "That's what we have always believed." It held that with the prize limitation which the Irwins used, their games were not gambling devices, even if they were games of chance. Here is a quote from the Supreme Court opinion.

"It is the hope of gaining something beyond the amount played which motivates people to gamble and creates the danger associated with gambling. The machines as operated in the instant case do not present the traditional dangers associated with gambling. The player can never `break the house' because the games are carefully controlled so that the player never wins an amount of tokens equal to or greater than the amount he has played. Thus, the motivation for playing these machines is not `reward' but entertainment as the player can never `win' anything other than a prize worth less than the amount he has played. The redeeming of tokens for prizes is ancillary to the machine's entertainment purpose, and not a reward as contemplated by the law of this Commonwealth."

In telling you this story, I have with (Wylie's permission) perhaps deprived him for a time of the low profile which he prefers. This is to make a few points and reinforce others, made in earlier parts of this series on redemption and the law:

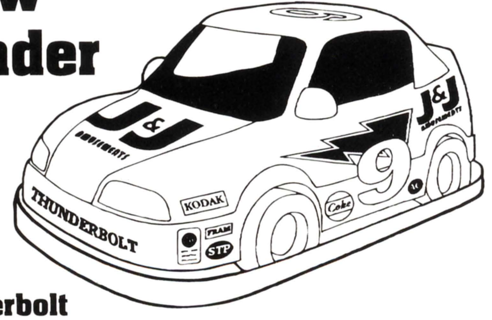
- At times, even the courts realize that it isn't chance that makes gambling, it's reward.
- When the law is unclear, the lack of clarity causes hardship for our industry and for law enforcement alike. Think of the vast resources required to take this case from search warrant through Supreme Court decision. Think of the uncertainty faced by all of law enforcement and all of the industry in Pennsylvania, while the case was pending and the question undecided.

The hardship on the operator's side is even more unjust than the hardship on the side of law enforcement. In this case as in so many others, the entire burden of clarifying a state law was cast upon a single operator. We should be thankful that the operator who "drew the short straw" in this case had the courage to go the distance and achieve justice.

- Doesn't this account convince you that the better course would be to prevail upon the legislature to change, clarify, and liberalize the statute, rather than continue to operate under a set of rules which is both archaic and unjust? ▲

Tom Fricke is a St. Louis-based attorney who specializes in amusment game issues.

New Thunder



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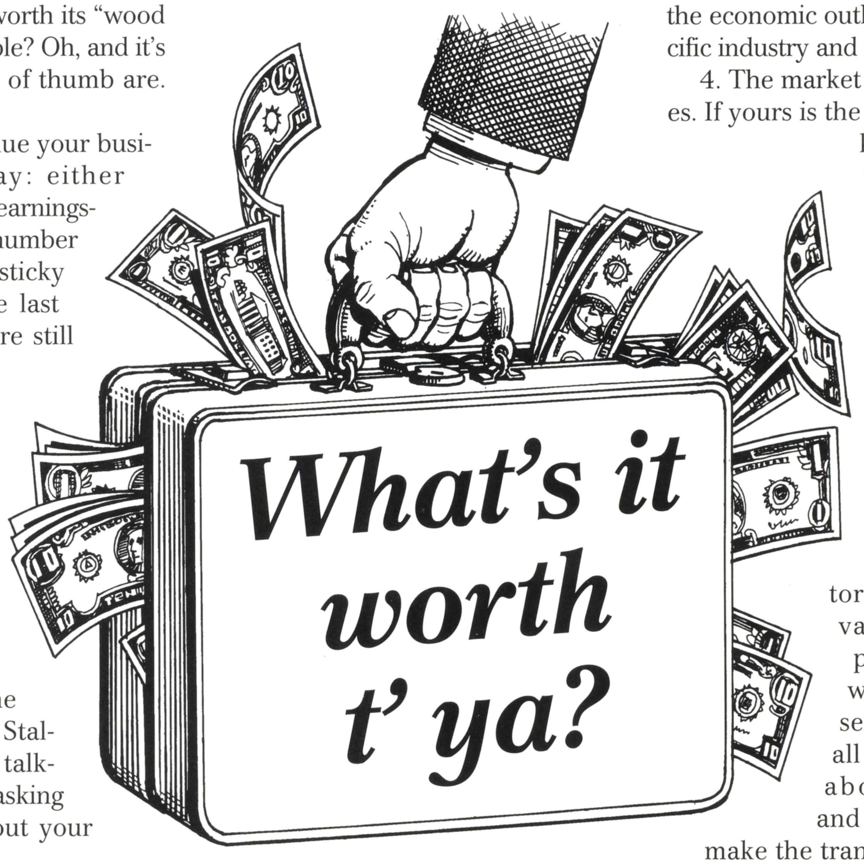


What's it worth t' ya?

Channing Hayden

Like beauty, the value of a business is in the eye of the beholder. Still, there should be an easy answer to the question, "What's a business worth?" And there is. Ask around and someone will tell you that your route is worth its "wood value." Wasn't that simple? Oh, and it's wrong, too. Most rules of thumb are. So are comparatives.

The right way to value your business is the hard way: either through asset-based or earnings-based valuations. The number crunching gets a little sticky and, after you dot the last decimal point, there are still subjective factors to consider. But, despite their difficulty, one of these methods should prevent you from overvaluing your business or, heaven forbid, undervaluing it.

What's it worth t' ya?

No, we're not on the mean streets with Sly Stallone or Steven Seagal talking to a stoolie. We're asking a simple question about your business.

A question that simple shouldn't be difficult to answer. Unfortunately, it is. Compounding the problem is the fact that the value you put on your business will probably not be the same as the value put on it by a potential buyer. Like beauty, the value of a business is in the eye of the beholder.

Your business may be worth a lot more to you than to a potential purchaser, and well it should. That company is your baby. You've spent most of your waking life with it, nurturing it since it was no more than a twinkle in your mind's eye. On the other hand, a buyer may think it's worth more than you do. He or she may know how to make it more efficient and profitable, or may have identified an undeveloped niche market that fits your operation perfectly.

The subject of valuing a business is so involved that anything less than a book-length discussion doesn't do it justice. In fact, Dr. Shannon Pratt, an expert in business valuation, has written two books on the topic, "Valuing A Business" (Second Edition, Richard D. Irwin Inc., 1989) and "Valuing Small Businesses and Professional Practices" (Richard D. Irwin Inc., 1986).

Dr. Pratt identifies the five most important factors in valuing a business as:

1. The general condition of the company, i.e., the accuracy of its financial statements, the physical condition of the facilities, morale of the employees, condition of the inventory (style, salability, etc.).
2. The ability to transfer good will and other intangible assets to the new owner.
3. Economic conditions (such as the cost and availability of financing) and the economic outlook, in both the specific industry and in general.
4. The market for similar businesses. If yours is the only company of its kind for sale, you may be able to command a higher price than if there are six other businesses like yours for sale in the same town.
5. The recent profit history of the business and its future profit potential.

In Dr. Pratt's view, these factors affect fair market value, which is the price struck by a willing buyer and seller who both know all the important facts about the business, and neither is forced to make the transaction.

Businesses usually don't sell at fair market value because three other considerations influence the sale price. Dr. Pratt identifies them as:

1. The personal circumstances of the buyer and seller. For example, is the buyer forced to sell for personal or financial reasons?
2. How the buyer and seller view the relative benefits of a cash sale vs. seller or bank financing.
3. The tax effects of the sale on the buyer and seller, which in turn, is a function of how the transaction is structured.

With the value of a business determined by both qualitative and quantitative components, it's impossible to suggest one best way to determine the exact worth of a going concern. I can give you an idea of where to start and what approaches the bean counters might use. Remember, though, if you're not selling the company but transferring it to your children, you may be more interested in the structure of the sale than the price. Whether negotiating a sale or conveying your company to your heirs, be sure to get advice from your accountant, lawyer, and tax advisor.

Down and dirty methods

Whatever business you're in, be it a surplus store or an arcade, you've probably heard some rule of thumb to value your company. In the coin-operated amusement business, for example, the rule of thumb is to use the "wood value" of the company—the replacement cost of the games themselves.

I'd like to suggest a good rule of thumb for rules of thumb: don't use them.

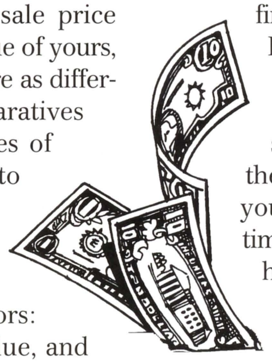
No two companies are alike, even if they're in the same business across the street from each other. Rules of thumb assume that companies in the same business are pretty much alike. Nothing could be further from the truth. Companies differ substantially. When selling your business, it's your job to stress the positive differences in order to negotiate a higher price.

Table 1

Five-Year Projected Cash Flow

Year 1	$110,000
Year 2	$121,000
Year 3	$133,100
Year 4	$146,410
Year 5	$161,051

Another down and dirty method of valuing a business is through comparisons. If several similar businesses have been sold recently, their sale price should approximate the value of yours, right? Nope. If companies are as different as fingerprints, comparatives aren't any better than rules of thumb. Sorry, you'll have to do it the hard way.



Asset-based valuation

Asset-based valuation comes in three basic flavors: book value, liquidation value, and adjusted book value. An asset-based valuation works best when the business generates its earnings from its assets (for example, an arcade) rather than, say, its employees, as in the case of a law practice or accounting firm.

Book value is the dollar amount of your assets as shown on your balance sheet. Liquidation value is the price you would receive if you sold your assets one at a time. Liquidation value can be higher or lower than book value.

If you own a fully depreciated building on a piece of land bought years ago, liquidation value may be much greater than book value. The land itself is likely to be carried on your balance sheet at cost and, if you've owned it for a while, it's probably appreciated in value. The building may be fully depreciated, but it too may have a market value greater than its original purchase price. Conversely, if you own capital equipment that's been depreciated according to the tax code, it may be worth less on the market than it is on your books.

Adjusted book value is similar to liquidation value, with one important difference. After your assets have been adjusted to reflect the cost of replacing them in their current condition, your liabilities are subtracted.

The following list shows how certain assets are commonly adjusted:

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Inventory: Usually adjusted downward. Some inventory may be out of style, out of season, or obsolete and difficult to sell at cost.

Real Estate: Usually adjusted upward as mentioned above. Don't automatically assume this to be true. A professional appraisal is a worthwhile investment.

Furniture, Fixtures, Plant, and Equipment: Depending on the length of time these items have been in service, they may be adjusted up or down based on how book value compares to market value. Adjust upward if they have been depreciated below market, downward if they've become obsolete.

After adjusting the book value and subtracting liabilities, you have a first cut on the value of your business, but it's not the final word. Your assets do more than just sit there; they generate revenue. The drawback of adjusted book value is that it does not estimate your company's worth as a going concern. To do so, you must factor in the earnings potential of your business. Here's where the number crunching really starts.

Capitalization of earnings

This method takes into consideration earnings, risk, and opportunity costs. Capitalization of earnings is based on an estimate of future earnings, not what happened in the past—unless the past is a good indicator of what will happen in the future.

Let's say you decide that $100,000 per year is a reasonable estimate of your company's future earnings. Next, you must adjust future earnings for the risk involved in generating them. For example, if your business was risk-free (Ha!), you'd use a risk factor that represents a risk-free investment like U.S. Treasury Bills which, as I write this, may not be as risk-free as we all assume considering the present federal budget brouhaha. T-Bills are currently paying somewhere around 6%. If the government's gone belly up and T-Bills are paying 24% by the time you read this, I trust you'll find some other rate of return that represents a risk-free investment.

Using 6%, you'd capitalize your earnings as follows: $100,000 divided by 0.06 = $1,666,667.

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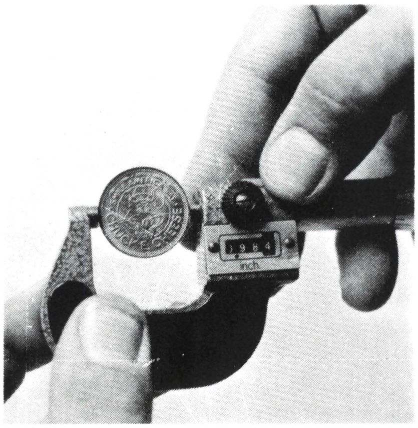

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That's the value of your business if it were a risk-free investment, but it's not. You have to adjust for the risks involved. Here's where everything becomes subjective. How risky is your business? Think about it for a minute. Hard to tell, isn't it?

To avoid another eye-of-the-beholder situation, look at business failure rates in your industry as a measure of risk, or overall small business failure rates as reported by the Small Business Administration. Failing that, choose a capitalization factor using the following guidelines: a high risk business should be capitalized at 50% and an average risk business at 25% to 30%.

A high risk business generating $100,000 per year would be worth $100,000 divided by 0.50 = $200,000; and an average risk business would be worth $100,000 divided by 0.25 = $400,000.

Great! So far, we've calculated your business to be worth between $200,000 and $1.6 million. You could have done better with a dart board. But wait, it gets worse. You still haven't considered opportunity cost.

Opportunity costs are determined by the alternative uses of your assets. If your only other available investment yields 7.5% (high grade corporate bonds, for example) then you'd value your business at $1.333 million ($100,000 divided by 0.075).

Suppose you've capitalized your business at 25% and find an opportunity to invest your assets at 40%. You would then value your company at $250,000 ($100,000 divided by 0.4) rather than $400,000 ($100,000 divided by 0.25).

It gets even more confusing if you're selling your business. The buyer likely has a completely different perspective on risk and opportunity costs. He may even view the potential future earnings of the company differently than you do.

So why did I waste your time discussing capitalization of earnings? So you'd know the pitfalls and avoid what appears on the surface to be a reasonable way to value your business.

Discounted cash flow

Those of you who read my column regularly know I have three simple rules for operating a business:

1. Ask the customer what he wants.
2. Give the customer what he wants.
3. Get cash for it.

So naturally, the business valuation method I favor, while complicated, focuses on cash flow.

To calculate your cash flow for valuation purposes, start with the net profit (or loss) of the business before taxes in the last complete fiscal year and:

1. Add the owner's salary and cash equivalent of the benefits paid the owner. These are rewards of acquiring the business that will accrue to the new owner and should be included in the cash flow analysis.

> **"Sellers and buyers always value a business differently because each sees the same reality from a different perspective."**

Table 2

Present Value of $1 Due at The End of n Years at The Discount Rates Shown

n	10%	11%	12%	26%
1	0.90909	0.90090	0.89286	0.79365
2	0.82645	0.81162	0.78719	0.62988
3	0.75131	0.73119	0.71178	0.49991
4	0.68301	0.65873	0.63552	0.39675
5	0.62092	0.59345	0.56743	0.31488

2. Add extraordinary expenses, those which are not expected to reoccur each year such as the settlement of a lawsuit or the services of a management consultant.
3. Add non-cash expenses such as depreciation, amortization, and depletion.
4. Subtract cash expenses which will be incurred by the new owner (for example, modernizing the computer system like you've sworn to do for the past three years).
5. Subtract income tax payments.
6. Subtract extraordinary income such as the proceeds from the sale of equipment over book value or the settlement of a lawsuit you won for a change.
7. If the buyer is assuming all the liabilities of the company, interest remains as an expense and debt service is subtracted to determine cash flow. If the buyer is not assuming the company's debt, interest payments and debt service is added to determine cash flow.

Note: If using outside financing for all or part of the purchase price, the buyer will adjust your cash flow calculations by the required interest and debt service payments. There's no getting around the fact that sellers and buyers always value a business differently because each sees the same reality from a different perspective.

Calculate your cash flow for the past three years to develop a trend. Hopefully it's at least flat or trending upward. If the trend is downward—well, you can imagine the impact it will have on the value of your business.

Project the trend in cash flow for the next three to five years.

The results will look like Table 1, assuming your cash flow was

Table 3

Table 1 Cash Flow Discounted at 11%

	Cash Flow		Discount Factor		Present Value
Year 1	$110,000	x	0.90090	=	$99,099
Year 2	$121,000	x	0.81162	=	$98,206
Year 3	$133,100	x	0.73119	=	$97,321
Year 4	$146,410	x	0.65873	=	$96,445
Year 5	$161,051	x	0.59345	=	$95,576
Total Present Value					**$486,647**

$100,000 in the last fiscal year and the trend was increasing at 10% per year.

"But I'm selling myself short," you say. "This business has been handed down from father to son for three generations. Five years is not long enough."

Unfortunately, that's as good as it gets. Most small businesses (and many midsize and large companies) can't make reliable cash flow projections for more than three to five years. If you can convince a perspective buyer that you can, great. But if you're on the other side of the negotiations and buying a business, take any such claim with a mountain of salt.

Table 4

Table 1 Cash Flow Discounted at 26%

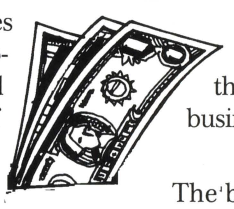
	Cash Flow		Discount Factor		Present Value
Year 1	$110,000	x	0.79365	=	$87,302
Year 2	$121,000	x	0.62988	=	$76,215
Year 3	$133,100	x	0.49991	=	$66,538
Year 4	$146,410	x	0.39675	=	$58,088
Year 5	$161,051	x	0.31488	=	$50,712
Total Present Value					**$338,855**

> **"Asset-based valuation comes in three basic flavors: book value, liquidation value, and adjusted book value."**

Now it's time to calculate the present value of your cash flow stream. Somewhere around fourth grade the teacher drummed compounding into our thick little skulls by making us repeat: $1 invested today at 4% will equal $2 18 years from now. Discounting (determining present value) is the exact opposite of compounding: $2 18 years from now discounted at 4% is worth $1 today. Present value is today's worth of a future stream of income.

In terms of our example, the question becomes: What would you pay today for the cash stream shown in Table 1? To answer you must choose the correct discount rate. That in itself is a complicated task. In his books, Dr. Pratt discusses the selection of the discount rate in detail. For our purposes we'll take a simplified approach.

Many companies publish industry-wide financial data. We've referred to "Industry Norms and Key Business Ratios" by Dunn & Bradstreet in the past (see Play Meter, February 1995). One of the ratios provided by "Industry Norms" and other such publications is return on net worth (owner's equity). In fact, "Industry Norms" provides three different measures of return on net worth: the upper quartile, the median, and the lower quartile. Use one of them to discount the stream of cash flows and determine its present value.



Suppose you've looked up your business in "Industry Norms" and found that the median rate of return on net worth is 11%. How do you apply that information to the cash flow in Table 1?

There are many sources of present value tables (for example, pocket guides, computer programs, and your accountant), all of which will furnish data much like that shown in Table 2.

The appropriate discount factor in Table 2 is used to calculate the present value of your cash flow. Using Table 1 as an example, the results are shown in Table 3.

Suppose you decide it is more appropriate to discount the cash flows at 26%, the upper quartile of the rate of return on net worth you found in "Industry Norms." The results are shown in Table 4.

As you see, the choice of the discount rate has a major impact on the value placed on the business. That's why selecting the appropriate rate of return is so critical. Your accountant or an SBA counselor should be able to help you select the correct discount rate, as well as wade through the entire swamp of business valuation.

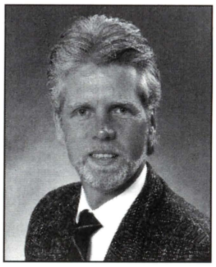
The bottom line

The bottom line is that there is no single bottom line. If this article convinces you that the subject of business valuation is very complex, it's done its job. If you're only interested in getting a handle on what your business is worth, one of the methods set out here should help. If, however, you're negotiating the sale or purchase of a business, you should seek help from an expert in determining the range of values for the company in question.

That's right, range of values. When all is said and done, there's no single answer to the question, What's it worth t' ya? The value of a business is in the eye of the beholder. ▲

Channing Hayden is a New Orleans businessman, writer, and management instructor at Tulane University.

by Steve McCaul



Q: Can I get into redemption with only a few games?

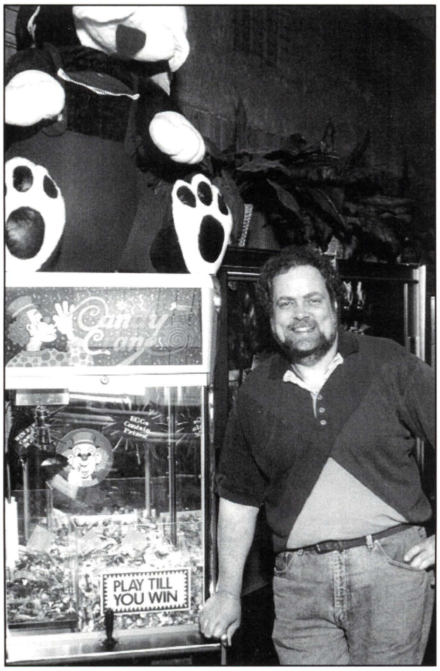
In an attempt to demystify redemption, this column will answer commonly asked questions about this often misunderstood segment of the coin-op industry.

The answer to the above question is a resounding YES! Here's a case in point: An established bowling center with 24 bowling lanes called me and said, "I have four video games earning $175 a week, gross. Can I be successful getting into redemption?"

First, we had to decide if there was enough customer traffic entering the bowling center. This is very important because you are not going to get an influx of money just because you place redemption games at your location.

You must have the customer business first, then they will spend more money when they visit your location

Prizes are well displayed above the control desk.



Phil Hamric, proud owner of Timber Lanes, next to his Smart Candy Crane.

THE DEALER
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The game area sports 10 units (six are redemption) and prize display.

A small case of low-end prizes is on the side of the control desk.

and utilize the redemption games as well as the videos already in place.

Redemption provides long, steady revenue—not the fast punch you get from video or "hot" games. If you can mix the two, you will have a successful and profitable location.

In my discussion with the location, Timber Lanes in Abington, Mass., we concluded that the bowling center had a strong adult business due to the bowling leagues, lottery business, and the small bar attached to the center.

We decided we did not want to target just the adult players; we needed to attract younger players as well. We came up with a mix of two adult games and two children's games (all redemption) for the first bowling season with a new look in the game area.

The owner placed a small display case of prizes with a value of $5 and under adjacent to the spot where change was made. Then customers could easily see the merchandise. Game revenue jumped to $600 a week.

I suggested he purchase adult prizes, such as sports items, small household appliances, and collectible-type gifts. The cost for this inventory was $800 initially. When he did so his collections went up to $1,200 a week!

Six months later he added to the game mix and now has 10 games: six redemption, one pinball, a deluxe sit-down driver, one upright video, and a candy crane, all of which occupy a mere 500 square feet of space. He has devoted 258 square feet to display prize merchandise in three showcases, above the main control desk, and above the games themselves.

Approximately 18 months after introducing redemption equipment, he has now developed his location to gross an average of $2,000 to $2,500 a week! The two adult redemption games account for almost 50 percent of his room. Following a recent spring break, he reported that his gross had increased to over $3,200.

The key to the success of this bowling center is the hard work and effort he and his employees put into this business, coupled with plenty of eye-catching displays of quality prizes, generous ticket awards, and the proper mix of games that cater to both young and older customers.

This is an actual scenario that can be adapted to almost any location and duplicated over and over again with great success and profit if all involved are willing to put in the time and effort.

Steve McCaul is a consultant and redemption specialist with his own company, Global Coin Equipment Exchange in Kingston, Mass., (617) 585-8600; fax (617) 585-8399. ▲

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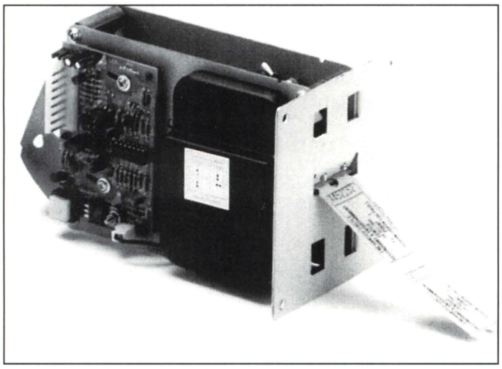

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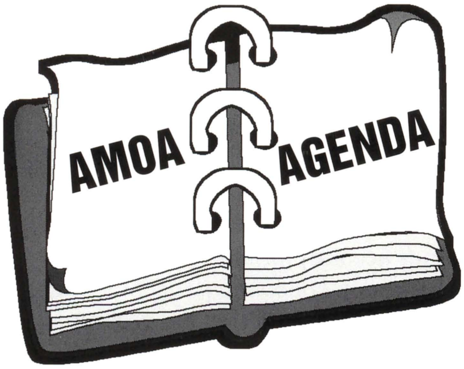
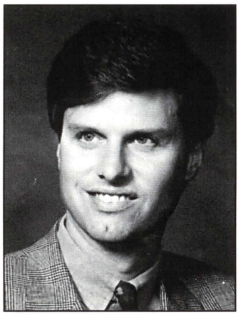


"I have met the enemy..."

Randy Chilton, now halfway into his presidential term for AMOA, finds meeting and talking with operators across the country very rewarding. He notes that no matter where you are, the industry issues remain fairly constant.



Randy Chilton
AMOA President

I am more than halfway into my term as President of the AMOA. Many people say one of the best things about this industry is the people you meet and become friends with. I couldn't agree more. It is pretty terrific to meet new people in the industry, learn about their businesses and their families, and make new friends. Learning about the issues other operators face in their own businesses is invaluable.

One of my favorite experiences is returning to the AMOA Notre Dame Executive Development seminar in South Bend, Ind., as I did last month. We discussed all sorts of different issues operators face today. It always amazes me that operators all over the country have the same issues to deal with.

In this age of change, the topics a group of operators will always get around to are the cost of equipment, price per play, commission splits, and location contracts.

Let me make a few observations based on our conversations. Equipment costs more today than it did in the past. New games should cost more than 25 cents to play. An Operator needs more than 50% of the gross income if he is to set the newest equipment in his locations. Location agreements make good sense for both the location owner and the operator.

What Operator would argue with the above statements? Very few. How many are addressing these issues in their businesses? Again, very few. There is one good reason: operators are underestimating the sophistication of their customers. In each statement above, the result to the location owner should be that he will have more money in his pocket at the end of the day. Isn't that our primary objective for each of our customers? Isn't that the business we're in? Does your company's mission statement say, "I'm in the business of paying 50 percent," or does it say, "I'm in the business of maximizing the net amusement machine revenues for each of my customers."

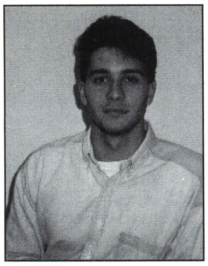
Let me tell you something you already know. Every one of your customers wants to make more money than they are making now, and it is your job to make them more money. You have the products available today to increase their net game earnings, but the challenge is the high cost of the games.

There is a problem. We haven't convinced ourselves. No matter what service you are providing, or what business you are in, if you are not convinced that your product is the best available, then you have no chance of convincing someone else that your product is the best. It is the operator who is the hardest person to convince, not the customer. The customers are professional, and in most cases successful, business people who understand the economies of your business much more than you give them credit for.

Our customers at Chilton Vending are the best people in the world. Many have become very good friends over the years. I would never consider a proposition for one of our customers that wasn't a "win-win" situation. Operators that propose "win-lose" propositions to their customers generally don't stay around very long. I have customers tell me "no thanks" to new ideas quite frequently. That is the customer's right: he is my boss.

If our customers are to prosper with the changing technologies, it is going to be because we as operators have adapted to the changes as they occur. This is going to require forward thinking and open-mindedness to new ideas and methods. Your customers will thank you. ▲

by Greg Reeves



Adventure appears in three different forms

How can you make a workhorse fighting game fresh and interesting? What's the latest in fast-action shooting simulators? Who offers 13-ball multiball?

The answers to all three questions can be found this month in game offerings from Capcom, Namco, and Sega Pinball. Read on for details, surprises, and new features.

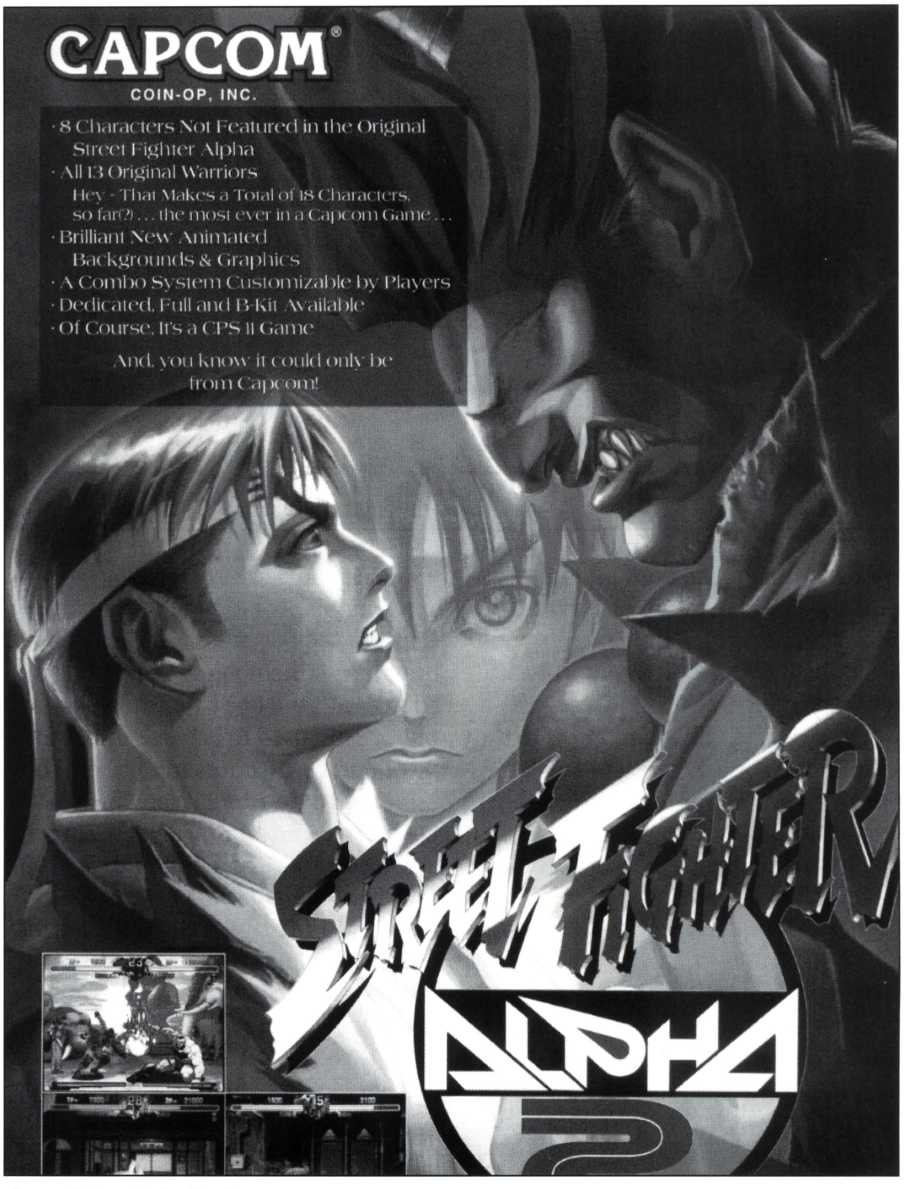
Street Fighter Alpha 2/ Capcom

Theme: Yet another sequel to the longest running fighting game series has been revealed, this time reuniting all 10 characters from the last *Street Fighter Alpha* but adding scores of new ones and all different background sceneries.

The two *Alpha* games represent the history of the *Street Fighter* characters and take place before the industry-rocking *SFII*, when Ryu and Ken were younger and Guile's pal Charlie was still alive.

By popular demand, Zangief and Dhalsim have now been added to the roster, along with player-accessible Bison, Akuma, and the previously hidden character Dan. Appearing for the first time are Rolento, a military combatant hailing from the *Final Fight* series; Sakura, a female Karate student in a schoolgirl uniform; and Gen, an aged martial arts instructor with the unique ability to use two different sets of attacks depending on whether the player chooses his crane or mantis style.

Using tons of combat strategy and special moves old and new, the player battles through the random roster of opponents to reach a customized ending story by defeating his ultimate foe.



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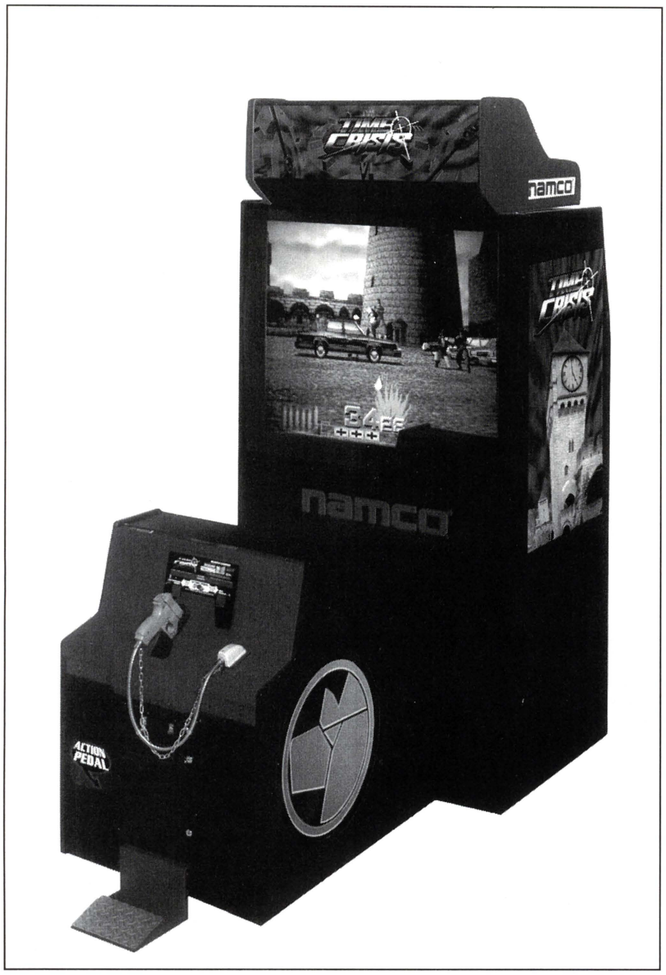
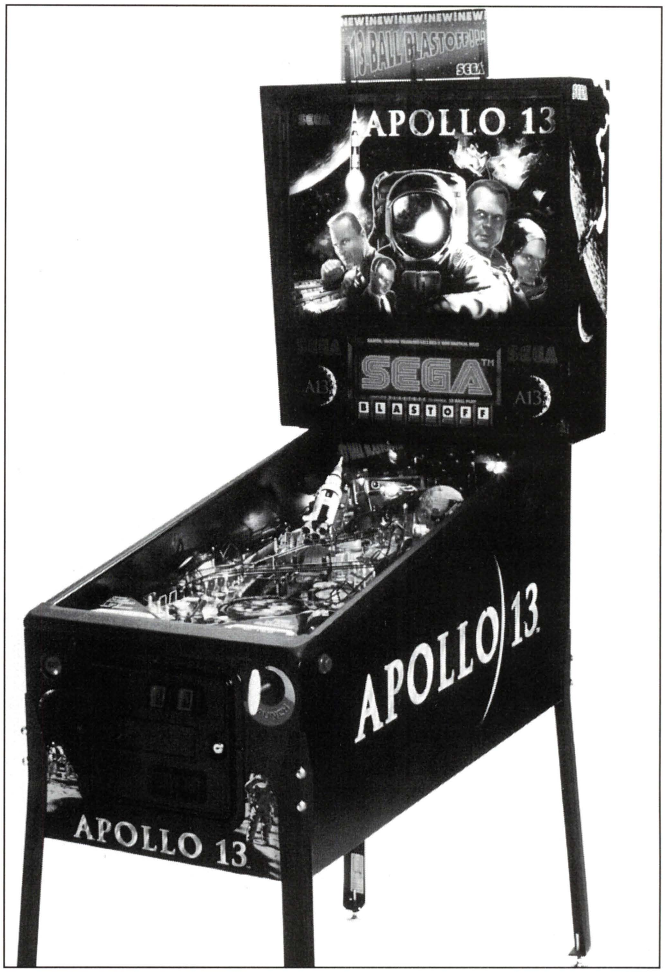
And, you know it could only be from Capcom!

Street Fighter Alpha 2 **by Capcom.**

Graphics: Still hanging on, despite a mass movement towards polygon graphics, *Alpha 2*'s visuals mimic the style from the previous game as well as from *Marvel Super Heroes* and *DarkStalkers*—that of animation-quality bit



Time Crisis by Namco.



Apollo 13 by Sega Pinball.

sprites. Much more fluid and detailed than the last generation of fighters, *Alpha 2*'s characters move as though hand-drawn in a strictly lateral environment.

One would think it limiting with the prominence of 3-D fighters available, but any other graphics capability would no doubt ruin the experience, much like the digitized SF movie adaptation.

More than just a recycled game, *Alpha 2* adds all-new backgrounds more active than the still-motion sceneries of the previous incarnation. For example, the battle with Rose in the first *Alpha* took place in a deserted section of Rome's Coliseum. Now Venice is the battleground, with boats continually passing and tourists waving and shouting.

Furthermore, Chun-Li wages combat in the midst of an enormous flock of bicycles, and Charlie battles within a mobile Harrier jet hangar.

Controls: For arcade veterans, new Capcom sequels are highly anticipated due to the unchanging control panel. Along with the obligatory joystick, six buttons are used to achieve three varying degrees of punishment for both kicking and punching. Needless to say, all fireballs and other special moves are accessed by combining these controls in numerous configurations.

Game Play: Players choose a fighter from the largest Capcom roster yet: 18 characters. Unchanged from the prequel, two out of three timed matches must be won to travel to the next world warrior. Again, all returning fighters possess the same moves from past Capcom games, and the super move remains intact along with its accompanying level meter.

Two features do debut here though, both of which enhance game play. First, the customizing combo system uses the energy meter as its power and allows roughly two or three seconds to press any combination of moves which are all executed in lighting-fast hyper mode. To begin this feature, the player presses three designated buttons, which pauses game movement momentarily while the moves are being input.

The second new play feature is called the Alpha counter which enables a one-hit counterattack immediately following a successful block. This facilitates coming out of a trapped corner and quickly changes defense to offense. Each character has a different final foe to defeat which customizes the ending story.

Overall: Capcom has altered and added enough new features to make *Alpha 2* a very different game from the first one. As a series, *Street Fighter* games always do well, perhaps because of the lack of intimidating graphics, the size of the cabinet, or just the sheer fun and accessibility of Capcom's fighting kits.

Time Crisis/Namco

Theme: Namco's follow-up to the phenomenal *Alpine Racer* experience is just as involving, though in a different genre. *Time Crisis* raises the ante on shooting simulators due to its amazing 3-D visuals, cabinet size, and a new control innovation which makes its debut here.

The one-player gun peripheral belongs to special agent Richard Miller, an 007/Indiana Jones-type adventurer. He is dispatched to rescue the kidnapped Prime Minister's daughter from a terrorist named Sherudo Garo. With his small army commanded by the vigilante Wild Dog, Garo threatens to kill his hostage if military secrets are not traded for her life.

The player, as Miller, must infiltrate a castle stronghold in the fictional country of Sercia, navigate the corridors and catacombs in vicious gun battles, and rescue the hostage.

Graphics: The graphics place *Time Crisis* one step above Sega's *Virtua Cop 2*. Realistic and believable castle interior environments are created by dimensional polygons and texture-mapped surfaces, both important to properly represent an old mountain fortress.

Characters still have slightly robotic movements and features, though easily overlooked because of the fast action sequences. Deserving of note are the story clips seen during the attract mode or at the beginning and end of the game, as perfectly choreographed as a film sequence in a political thriller.

Controls: An industry first game control feature debuts: the action pedal. The metal foot lever is used to initiate action on-screen by changing the player's position from an open firing view to a hiding defensive location.

Often, areas of the castle are littered with crates, columns, wall corners and the like, which the player can duck behind to avoid enemy fire. When the pedal is released, the enemies are confronted once again. The gun peripheral is the only other control and can be reloaded by using the pedal.

Game Play: The action pedal puts the game into a category all its own. It seems more realistic to avoid gunfire than to always be hit before the enemy is shot.

The player's gun can fire off six shots and is reloaded when he retreats behind an obstacle. All enemies of each area must be hit before moving on to the next scene. It is not possible to fire when retreated, but enemy bullets also cannot hit the player during this time.

However, a timer incessantly counts down, so much hiding is not possible. Should some enemy fire get through, up to five hits can be withstood before ending the game.

> **"The action pedal, which lets players retreat behind an obstacle, puts the game into a category all its own."**

The story mode is the more enjoyable scenario, yet a timed game is also available that allows for unlimited lives but ends when the level is completed.

Overall: Although forward movement and the course taken are computer-controlled, the action pedal feature alters game play each time so that player boredom is avoided. Innovations like this help keep interest in simulators that would otherwise become redundant.

Apollo 13/Sega Pinball

Theme: The latest game from Sega Pinball is another blockbuster movie adaptation. The "Apollo 13" movie and story is one of fear, failure, and finally triumph as the three-man crew face death but manage to survive.

A mechanical problem experienced halfway to the moon causes the astronauts to abort the lunar landing, continually alter flight path trajectory, construct a breathing apparatus, conserve as much power as possible, and finally descend through Earth's atmosphere with a damaged capsule.

The numerous challenges to the crew have been transferred to the playfield in the form of video modes, ramp shots, and the amazing 13-ball multiball. Game modes begin with the rocket launch, separation, distance to the moon, orbit, and various problems encountered on the trip back.

Features: The backglass display features most of the characters of the film, though curiously without Tom Hanks. The plunger comes in the form of a capsule hatch lever that is rotated to fire the ball into play.

Two ramps surround the lanes and air jets, each with a molded object suspended above. The first one supports a Saturn V rocket replica, which actually rises somewhat when the lift-off countdown reaches zero. Three-ball multiball is also initiated this way.

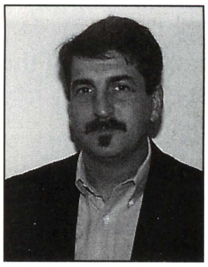
Secondly, a molded moon rotates to carry a ball via magnet as if in lunar orbit. The 13 balls are stored in a trench near the back of the playfield and are released when the countdown letters are scored, followed by a rocket ramp shot.

My favorite aspect of modern pinball games is the video mode, which visually resembles classic arcade games. One such mode in *Apollo 13* mimics Atari's *Lunar Lander*, in which the player must safely touch down the LEM by using flipper button-controlled thrusters.

Last but not least, honorable mention goes to the sound system which digitizes actors' voices and choice songs from the movie such as "Spirit in the Sky."

Overall: As great a representation as *Apollo 13* makes of the film, it is still based on a movie and could be forgotten in time. On the upside, there won't be a home version of the game so the only place to play it is at the local arcade. ▲

Randy Fromm



A Play Meter Monthly Exclusive

Bill acceptors and currency recognition

If you've ever wondered how a bill acceptor works, here's an explanation. Plus here is a detailed description of Diversified Systems' new Global Bill Acceptor and how it was designed to accept more bills than you'll probably ever have to deal with.

Coin-op will soon be a thing of the past. No, I'm not worried about the state of the industry. We may go through some ups and downs, but I'm certain we'll remain a vibrant part of the entertainment industry for the foreseeable future.

It appears, however, that magnetic striped cards, "smart cards" and, above all, currency validators are quickly supplanting the coin acceptor as the payment method of choice worldwide.

Vending machines, jukeboxes, amusement games, and car washes now come equipped with bill acceptors. At the casino where I work part-time in the tech department, we are responsible for keeping over 1,000 bill acceptors up and running 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During a trip to Italy last year, I stopped my rented Fiat at a deserted gas station on a deserted road somewhere between Pisa and Rome and was able to fill up by inserting 5,000 Lira bills into an automated fuel pump. Las Vegas has jumped on the bill acceptor bandwagon with both feet by equipping their slot machines with currency validators.

Paper money does succumb to the ravages of use as bills are passed from hand to hand, jammed into the jeans pocket of a 12-year-old, run through the clothes washer, written upon, folded, crushed, or otherwise transformed from the crisp, flat, sweet-smelling work of art it is when first issued to the malodorous, tattered, faded, limp item that most of us carry around in our wallets. In my case, I'm still the 12-year-old, preferring the cramming method to that of a neatly organized roll or billfold.

Of course, this type of abuse can make currency recognition difficult. It's frustrating when a bill acceptor rejects the bill again and again; a bill that appears to be perfectly acceptable to you or me but for some reason is rejected by the machine.

I must not be alone in this feeling of frustration. A well-known soft drink manufacturer once featured a million-dollar advertisement whose theme was the sound of a bill being rejected again and again by a balky bill acceptor in a soft drink vendor.

Despite a detailed knowledge of how bill acceptors operate, it still amazes me that they work at all. Not only does a bill acceptor have to identify the denomination of the bill being introduced, it must be able to accept all manner of worn, folded, crumpled, dirty, and sometimes wet bills.

During a recent conversation with a major manufacturer of bill acceptors, the topic of water parks was discussed. In this case, the manufacturer actually created some special software to account for the large number of completely soaked bills that were being used by customers.

Naturally, bill acceptors must be able to do all this without validating counterfeit or otherwise altered or fraudulent currency. Without a human being to scrutinize a tendered bill, the bad guys can (and do) try all kinds of wild schemes to cheat bill acceptors.

Early recognition scheme

Early recognition methods didn't have to be particularly sophisticated. The bill acceptors took only $1 bills, and there is little incentive to counterfeit a $1 bill.

Recognition was basically performed by using a magnetic head, just like the magnetic head in a monaural audio tape recorder. As the bill passed through the acceptor, a permanent magnet was used to polarize a quarter-inch strip of the magnetic ink used to print the bill.

The magnetized strip of the bill then traveled past the surface of the magnetic head, with a pressure roller on the opposite side of the bill to assure good contact with the head. As the bill passed the head, varying amounts of electrical current were generated, depending on the density of the ink on that particular section of the bill. The darker the area, the greater the magnetic field, the higher the current.

The small signal generated by the magnetic head was amplified (just as in an audio amplifier) then converted from analog to digital with an appropriately named analog to digital converter. Early bill acceptors used small scale integration to create an ADC. As we'll see later, analog to digital conversion has come a long way with sophisticated (and itty-bitty) microprocessors that include on-chip ADCs.

The digital signal (the "signature" if you will) of the bill was compared with the signature of a genuine dollar bill that was stored in memory (in a "lookup table" in a ROM) and if they matched, the bill was considered to be genuine. There was little in the way of security in these early units. Even old, washed, or dirty bills would usually be accepted, so the range of recognition and acceptance was quite broad.

That broad range tightened up a bit as the need for $5 bill validators grew. Tolerances grew smaller as the acceptor now had to be more discriminating than before. Of course, the digital signatures of the two bills were different, so it was easy to tell the $1s and $5s apart. Among other things, the finely etched grid behind the president's portraits is a different size for the $5 than it is for the $1 bill. When this grid is translated into a "pulse train," the difference between the two bills is obvious. The smaller grid produced a higher frequency pulse train while the larger grid generated a string of lower frequency pulses.

Because timing was such a critical part of the bill acceptor's operation, it was important that the motor always operated at the correct speed. As the motor aged, it would begin to slow. The change was nearly imperceptible and would cause the bill acceptor to exhibit poor acceptance. This meant, of course, that the customer would reinsert the bill again and again in an attempt to cause it to be accepted. Naturally, this accelerated the wear and tear on the unit and quickly caused total failure to accept.

Diversified Systems staff, (l-r): David Mays, John Petkus, and Kelly Olewiler.

Simply applying power to the motor and watching it run was not, in any way, a test for proper motor operation. This is still one of the most common mistakes made during bill acceptor repair. A technician will completely disassemble the bill acceptor, properly clean and reassemble it, and be completely baffled when it still fails to operate properly, simply because the motor is running a tiny bit slow.

Diversified Systems

Because timing is so important, the engineers at Diversified Systems have made use of a clever, simple technique for eliminating motor performance as a variable in the business of bill recognition. In addition to pulling the bill through the validator, the motor also drives a small tachometer. It's a simple, optical coupler and slotted wheel just like a trackball or computer mouse (take your mouse apart and you'll see two of them, one for each axis.)

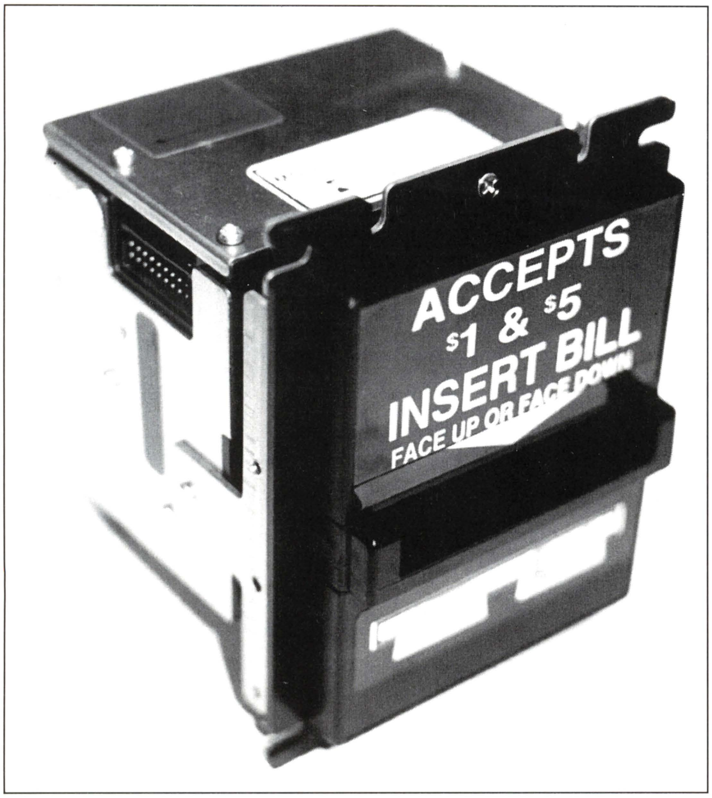
Actually, tachometer may be somewhat of a misnomer here as any changes in motor speed are now completely irrelevant. By using the optical sensor, Diversified's Global Bill Acceptor looks at the exact position of the bill as it passes through the unit, not the speed at which the motor is operating.

"The Global Bill Acceptor has passed muster for electro-static discharge as well."

Regardless, motor failures are not likely in this unit as it uses a permanent magnet motor manufactured by Canon that has proven to have more than 10 years life expectancy in accelerated life tests.

If motor failure is a thing of the past, mag head problems are too because the GBA has dropped the bulky and unreliable magnetic validation scheme and replaced it with 11 optical sensors. An optical sensor is an LED/photo transistor pair.

There are several different types of optical sensors placed strategically in the bill path. Some of the optics use invisible, infrared light; others use visible, orange light. In this way, the colors



Model SLE (stackerless bill acceptor)

of the bill (some countries, make that MOST countries, have much more colorful currency than the greenbacks printed by the United States of America) can be interpolated rather than depending on the monochromatic limitation of infrared light alone.

Some sensors are used to detect the position of the bill within the unit. For example, inserting a bill into the acceptor breaks a beam of light as it passes through the gap between a light emitting diode and a photo transistor. This energizes the motor and pulls the bill through the unit for validation. A similar optic on the other side lets the unit know when the bill has passed through all the way and is ready to enter the stacker.

Other optics generate highly focused beams of light that reflect off both the top and bottom of the bill and are detected by photo transistors on the same side of the bill as the emitter. This not only assures full, four-way acceptance but augments security as the GBA checks not only the relative transparency of the bill but its reflectivity as well. The use of counterfeit paper or inks is sure to throw off the signature of the bill in one or the other (or both) of these tests for validity.

The outputs of the photo transistors in the optics are processed something like the output of the magnetic head was in the older system. The output of each optic is converted to a digital signal by an analog to digital converter. Only this time, there are eight of them and each ADC has full, eight-bit resolution. This eight-channel, eight-bit ADC is a part of the NEC 78C10 micro controller that is the "brains" of the GBA. This tiny device is mounted on a four-layer PCB that is manufactured in-house by Diversified Systems and reads the inputs of all 11 optical sensors at 120 different points on the bill for each optic.

Each of the 11 optical sensors has its own lookup table for every different denomination the GBA is programmed to accept. That's a total of 1,320 individual points that are checked on every bill that passes through the validator. Diversified makes no different "grades" of security for its bill acceptors. A Global Bill Acceptor destined to spend its life validating one dollar bills does so with the same degree of accuracy and security as those that accept $20, $50, or $100 bills.

Differing currency sizes and global acceptance

"Diversified Systems manufactures the Global Bill Acceptor, ONE platform for a wide variety of markets and applications, that will accept almost any world currency. It's high technology at an incredibly affordable price and its speed is second to none," claims Diversified's director of sales, John Petkus.

While designing a bill validator for the global market, Diversified Systems' engineers faced the daunting challenge of the widely varying sizes of the world's currency. While different size bills make it easy for the blind to distinguish one denomination from another, they can pose problems for bill validators.

For the system to work, the bills must travel in a precise path through the acceptor. For countries that use denominations of varying sizes, a precisely manufactured channel or guide had to be fabricated that would guide each denomination into the proper channel to align it for recognition and validation. Diversified uses a patented note guide piece that justifies any width of currency up through 81 mm in width.

The engineering staff worked out the solution with the help of some new technology that's not just high tech, it's positively Buck Rogers (Star Wars?) It's called "stereo lithography," a process that uses a pair of computer controlled lasers driven by a 3-D CAD modeling program to produce precisely manufactured, fully 3-D component models from a soupy, goopy bath of uncured, polymer resin.

The laser beams pass through the resin bath and where they intersect, the resin hardens quickly. The two beams are scanned throughout the 3-D space of the resin bath, creating a solid object that is an exact replica of the computer designed guide.

Of course, with all the high-tech, they haven't forgotten about the real world; a world full of Coke spills and idiots armed with squirt-guns full of salt water. There is a frequently circulated rumor among the, shall we say, "underworld" that if you squirt salt water into a bill acceptor, it will go crazy and start issuing credits (it won't) or, depending on the version of the story you hear, start shooting cans of soft drinks out the front of the machine (it won't do that either). It's known as "salting" a bill acceptor. It's more like "assaulting" though because what it DOES do is ruin the PCB through both

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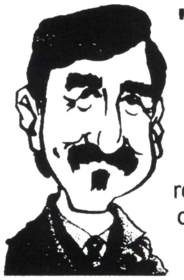

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Attention Operators !! Attention Operators !!

the conductive and corrosive properties of brine.

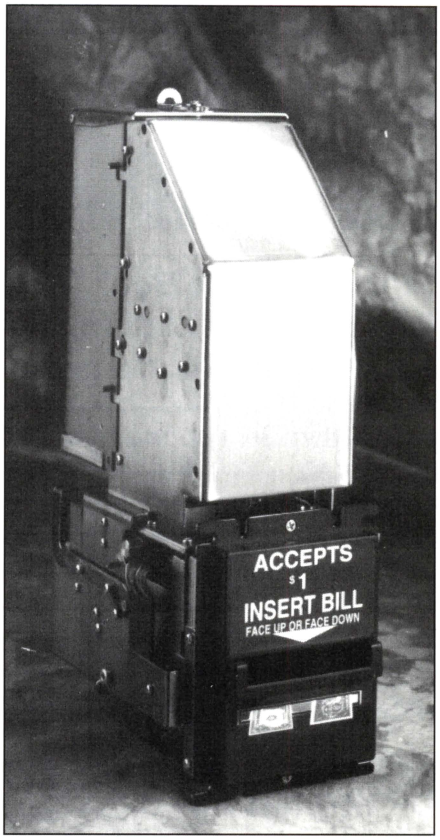
To prevent damage to the electronics, the lower printed circuit board of the Global Bill Acceptor is covered with a "conformal coating" that makes the electronics impervious to liquids, humidity, dirt, dust, or contamination of any sort. I first encountered conformal coating while working on a military satellite communications system for the U.S. Government. This project was so secret that, despite my security clearance, I was allowed to work on only a small portion of the system. It was one type of board, in fact.

All I knew was that it took data in and spit data out. But it must have been destined for a hostile environment because it also was covered with an impervious conformal coating. To work on the board, you simply pierced the coating with the sharp tip of your scope probe. But I digress. My point is that Diversified Systems has given careful consideration to our applications and designed its Global Bill Acceptor accordingly.

Impressed yet? I don't blame you. However, as the man says on TV, "But wait, there's more!" There are a couple of other features that I found impressive. One is a tiny little thing (I'm easy to impress, I guess.) It's just a little piece of braided steel cable. The cable is attached on one end to the body of the bill acceptor. The opposite end of the cable is permanently mounted to a precisely machined brass thumbscrew. Removing the thumbscrew opens the entire top of the bill acceptor so you can remove debris, clean the optics, or clear jams. The small cable holds the thumbscrew and prevents it from getting lost. It's a nice touch.

Recognition software

But I'm most impressed with the Windows-based software that allows end users to diagnose and calibrate the Global Bill Acceptor quickly and with ease. Using a GUI (pronounced 'gooey' in hip computer lingo—stands for 'graphical user interface') the software gives you a visual indication of the digital signature of each bill and the "envelope of acceptability" within which a genuine bill must fall in order to be validated. Any deviation and the bill is considered to be non-genuine.



Model USV vertical upstacker

Using the software is intuitive and easy. Calibration is always perfect with no pots to tweak or other controls to fool with and no oscilloscope or electronic knowledge required. The software's author has also incorporated a bit of humor as well. When the program enters the "sleep" mode (to preserve the life expectancy of the light emitting diodes in the optical sensors) the portrait of George Washington on the dollar bill goes to sleep.

The Global Bill Acceptor will validate up to eight denominations per country from over 26 countries currently, PLUS, bar coded coupons. Say you're from an emerging country that needs a bill acceptor for your brand new currency? OK, you're probably not; just pretend. Using a different, proprietary software package at the factory, Diversified Systems can have your new program within 48 hours. This 48 hours also includes any special interface needs that the customer may require.

The best news of all is that software changes can be downloaded to the bill acceptors in the field via a simple modular plug, just like a telephone plug and jack. Using the latest "flash ROM" technology, reprogramming doesn't even require a chip change! We're not just talking about new currencies here. The wet dollar bill is a perfect case in point. If most of your bills are bound to be a bit on the damp side, why not load your bill acceptors with the "wet bill" program? The Global Bill Acceptor makes it logical and easy to perform these simple changes in the field. There is even the capability to network a bank of bill acceptors (such as in casino gaming operation) such that all the bill acceptors can be reprogrammed without even touching a machine (other than a computer, of course.)

The Global Bill Acceptor has passed muster for electro-static discharge as well.

"We've done extensive ESD testing" said Diversified Systems' vice president of engineering David Mays. "The GBA has easily withstood up to 40 KV."

The unit has also impressed German authorities. In a documented test run last month at the German Central Bank, their technicians ran over 100 high quality counterfeit Deutchmark notes through the GBA interspersed with good notes. In EVERY instance the GBA rejected the frauds and accepted the good notes. The engineers from the German Central Bank were so impressed that they have written a letter of recommendation as to the quality of the Global Bill Acceptor's note recognition technology.

According to Petkus, "This endorsement is indicative of the GBA's advanced technology and is one of the many reasons why we feel we have a pretty incredible family of products. "

For further information about Diversified System's Global Bill Acceptor, contact: John Petkus, Diversified Systems, 2191 Mendenhall Dr., Suite 105, North Las Vegas, NV 89030; (702) 642-2112, fax (702) 642-2127, or e-mail: DSI LVegas@aol.com ▲

Larry Munday

Modifications to *UB-QB:*
keeping your balls from getting pinched

Although manufacturers may R&D their equipment prior to release, they cannot fully anticipate all potential problems that an operator may encounter. After operating National Sports Game's *UB-QB* for several years, I have run across several problems in the design and operation as is the case with any game. On this particular game, I have several fixes you might like to use.

When our *UB-QB* recently wore out, we replaced it with the new *UB-QB II* now being manufactured by Skee-Ball. Skee-Ball has made several welcome changes to this great earner, but I did find at least one flaw that I will explain later.

One of the major problems with the first *UB-QB* and possibly II is the fact that that one of the balls may become pinched between the target sensors and the vinyl canvas used on the sides of the game (**Fig. 1**). On *UB-QB II* Skee-Ball replaced the vinyl canvas with particle board. Attached to the back of the game they also added a nice foam pad which may eliminate the ball pinch problem, but I still added the modification I made for the first one. I simply added a couple of bars to the target sensors (**Fig. 2**).

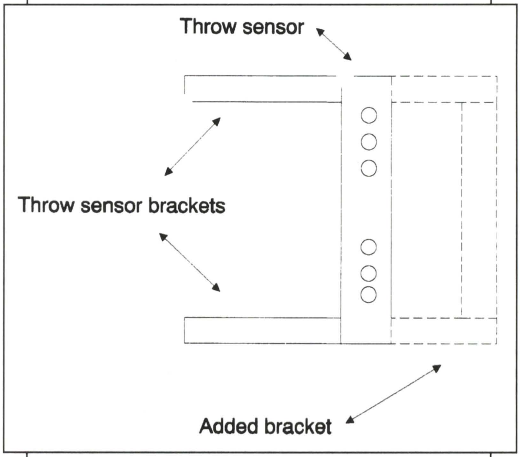
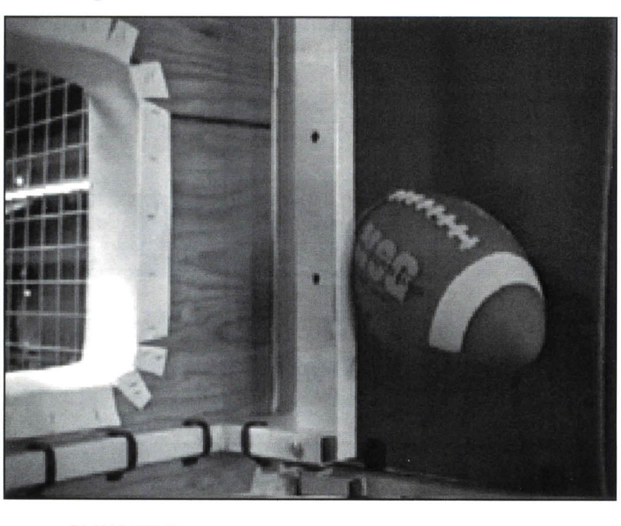


Figure 2

Figure 1



When a ball gets wedged it causes several problems: it takes one of the balls out of play; the player must wait longer for the remaining balls to be returned to him when he could be throwing the ball that is wedged; and the wedged ball could push the sensors out of alignment which will cause a good pass to read as incomplete.

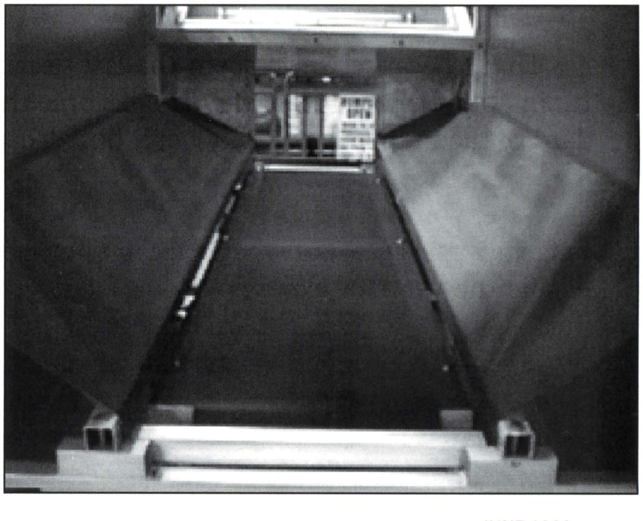
The next modification I made was the replacement of the vinyl canvas used to guide the balls back to the conveyor belt (**Fig. 3**).

With normal game play the balls bang around the inside of the game. These guides eventually tear and the balls once again fall out of play.

There are several different materials that could be used, but I opted for Lexan. I removed the canvas and secured the Lexan to the tubular steel with tapping screws. If you really want to do this job right, I would skip the Lexan and weld additional tubular steel rods in its place.

When the game is over and the conveyor belt stops, the balls will continue to roll and most often roll back to the customer. To wit, the customer will throw the balls back at the target causing more balls to roll back out to the customer. This cycle could last for several minutes causing more "normal use" damage with no additional money in the cash box.

Figure 3



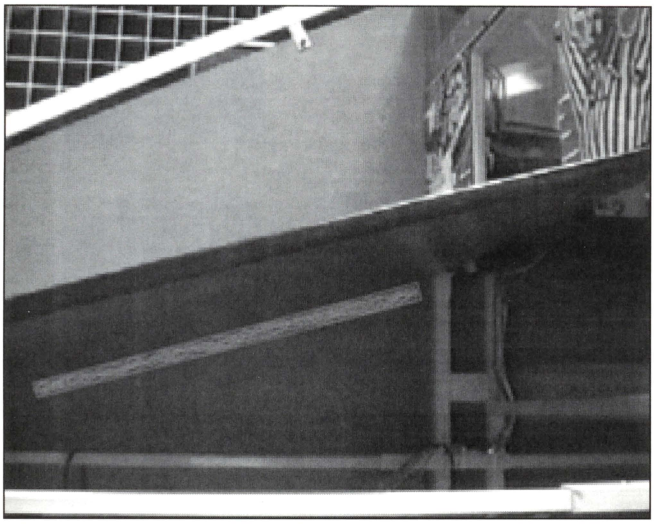


Figure 4

I have come up with a temporary fix, but I am still working on a more permanent one. I applied several strips of foam tape to the conveyor belt to limit the movement of the balls when the belt is stopped. This tape also helps push the balls out when the belt is running. Unfortunately, the tape must be replaced periodically. In the future I plan on sewing vinyl flaps to the conveyor belt.

Several changes were made on *UB-QB II*. The two I like the best are the addition of particle board all the way around the game instead of the vinyl canvas, and the use of metal cages instead of netting.

As I stated in the beginning, I did find one flaw with this new version. They replaced the vinyl canvas at the end of the conveyor belt with a piece of particle board. This board is only supported by its four corners, which is fine to hold the weight of footballs. But it won't hold the weight of a repairman who may step on it while climbing into the game to perform repairs, nor the weight of a cheap customer who may not want to pay for a game.

This is why I added two strips of angle iron to the left and right sides of the game (**Fig 4**).

Over the years *UB-QB* has been a good earner, and I suspect *UB-QB II* will do even better with the addition of these simple modifications.

If you have any questions about this or any other article, or if you have a problem I may be able to address, I can be contacted via e-mail at Batletec@aol.com or by fax (208) 322-7515. ▲

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World's best players compete in Team Dart XI

Amid electronic dart games and a wall of trophies: the smiling team of Forum Drinking Buddies from Kalamazoo, Mich.

The Merit Industries team, (l-r): Jack Houriet, Dave Myers, Darren Caposotosto, and Bob Wiles.

Happy second place winners of Ladies Team 301 Level 1: The Deadettes of Maple Grove, Minn.

The Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas, Nev., was again the setting for six rigorous days of competition among the world's leading electronic darts players when the AMOA-National Dart Association hosted Team Dart XI April 29-May 4.

Over 3,700 players vied for $180,000 in cash and awards and $15,000 in trophies. The event drew a record number of entries—1,200 teams. Seven foreign countries and the United States were represented.

Mike Smythe, executive director of the AMOA-NDA, extended special thanks "to the Sahara Hotel and Casino, its employees—Randy, Leslie, Mark, Linda, Terry, Carl, Jennifer, Mel—and the 40 association staff and committee members that made the event such a success." The awards banquet capped the final day of competition.

Players were generous with donations to the AMOA-NDA national charity, Give Kids the World, and raised over $3,000 for the worthy cause.

First place winners in the major categories were:

Open Team Cricket Level 1: Saddel & Spurs—Brad Steinbach, Chris Righter, Mike Sanders, and John Uraine.

Open Team Cricket Level 2: Assume the Position (Bear's Den Scalawags)—Danny Brandt, Eric Hunter, Rich Schnell, and Darin Brunson.

Open Team Cricket Level 3: Pump Big Dogs (All-In-Fun Vending)—Buster Cuppernell, Randy Mikeska, Sean "Mojo" Moran, and Jeff Smith.

Open Team Cricket Level 4: Dooners (JJ's, Anchorage, Alaska)—Dorsey Roland, Michael Sexton, Rick Davilabracero, Hap Thrush, and Alan Heckaman.

Masters Team Cricket: DSAB 1 (Germany)—Rainer Antz, Walter Kuebler, Chris Kotal, and Frank Mast.

Ladies Team Cricket Level 1: Salzburger Ladies (Vorderegger-Austria)—Ruth Ebner, Petra Pashammer, Steffi Reider, Lisa Steuibach, and Ursula Rothsdede.

Ladies Team Cricket Level 2: Breakers Roses (Southern California Darts)—Stacey Ward, Cindy Hoth, Mary G. Jones, and Pam Janowiak.

Ladies Masters Team Cricket: Rocco's Tradewinds (Hastings Distributing)—Carolyn Nessmann, Sharon Sonntag, Cyndi Mielcarek, and Amy Dierbeck.

Mixed Couples Cricket Level 1: Blondies Vegas Bound (Darts Works)—Jason Peterson, Julie Mellon, Steve Beard, and Trixxi Taylor.

Mixed Couples Cricket Level 2: Endangers Species—Jim Frost, Mary Webb, Tim Raymond, and Lori Thomas.

Mixed Couples 301 Level 1: Spanky's (Stansfield Vending)—Kathie Burr, Eric Nelson, Carla Nelson, Gary Happel.

Mixed Couples 301 Level 2: Untouchables—Bill Beard, Donna Pennington, Don Cummings, and Lola Lucas.

Mixed Couples 301 Level 3: Big Mac Combo—Scott McDiarmid, Howard Hill, Paula Adams, and Andra Kunkle.

Masters Mixed Couples: Rocco's Tradewinds (Hastings Distributing)—Carolyn Nessman, Bruce Holmes, Sharon Sonntag, and Rick Wnuk.

Open Team 101 Level 1: Merkur II—Dieter Niedermeier, Frank Liewald, Thomas Zollner, and Willie Lerndorfer.

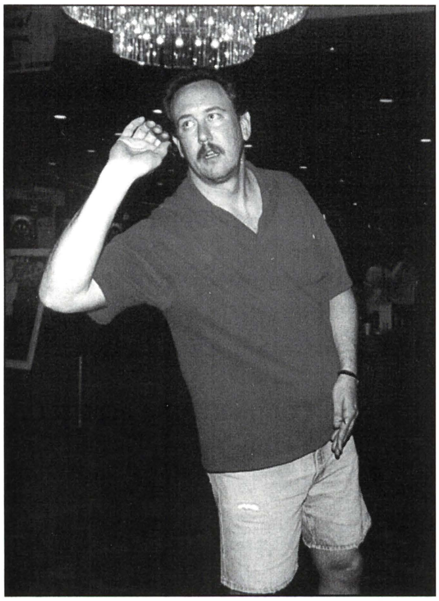
Open Team 301 Level 2: Spanky's Target Mast—Raymond Summers, Al Molton, Lindol Bazzell, and Mike Murphy.

Open Team 301 Level 3: Tal Como Suema—Domingo Flores, Antonio Munoz, Miguel Rodriguez, and Manuel Flores.

Recipients of Past Presidents Club rings, (l-r): Tony Urso of Madison Coin Machine, Jerry Borth of Hanson Distributing, Mike Smythe, Craig Dumdei of C & N Sales, Dave Warner of Warner Coin Machine, and Mike Hawkins of D & R Star. Not pictured: Tami Norberg-Paulsen.

Crystal Bar

The team of Tale of Two Cities from Winter Haven, Fla., took third place in Ladies Team 301 Level 1.



John Bade of Glass City Dart Leagues in Toledo, Ohio, in action.

1991
TEAM DART
VI
1992
TEAM DART
VII

Special eagle trophies were presented to longtime AMOA-NDA supporters for their commitment and service to the association. From left: Craig Dumdei of C & N Sales, Kenny Price of Welch Music, Doug Blair of Valley, Dave Myers of Merit, and Sam Zammuto of Arachnid.

Open Team 301 Level 4: High Tons—Bob Krepp, A.J. Welch, Roger Atwood, and Maxwell Callahan.

Open Team 301 Level 5: Rams (American Amusements)—Gary Wagenschutz, Ken Chartrand, Al Hughes, and Dennis Watkins.

Ladies Team 301 Level 1: Salzburger Ladies (Vorderegger-Austria)—Ruth Ebner, Petra Pashammer, Steffi Reider, and Lisa Steuibach.

Ladies Team 302 Level 2: Babes Where's There?—Janet Canter, Beverly D'Amato, Jennifer Whisenhunt, and Vickey Mezei.

Ladies Team 301 Level 3: Pointe East Pointettes—Missy Burbridge, Ginger Beedie, Jim Grantham, Cheryl Good, and Amanda Whitmore.

Ladies Team 301 Level 4: Nasty Girls—Lynda Nelson, Donna Brewer, Joanne Dinga, and Tina Bullock.

Ladies Masters Team 301: DSAB (Germany)—Miriam Breuer, Michaelia Ertl, Brigitte Thiele, and Bernadette Buchner.

Masters Team 501 DI/DO: DSAB 1 (Germany)—Frank Mast, Walter Kuebler, Marcus Schulte, and Chris Kotal.

Next on the AMOA-NDA schedule: the third annual Singles and Doubles International Championships in November at Adam's Mark Hotel in Indianapolis, Ind. For more details, contact Mike Smythe at the NDA offices, (800) 808-9884 or (317) 383-1299; fax (317) 387-0999. ▲

BullShooter tours come to the South

TOP GUN CHALLENGE
13

Arachnid A-Team tournament director John Hassett (l) with pro singles champ Chad Sylvan in Houston.

DAILY DOUBLE

Teresa Nevills (l) with the A-Team's Olivia Cruz was one of the big winners at the Texas regional.

Arachnid's BullShooter dart tour made recent stops in two southern states. The Texas BullShooter Regional was held at the Hilton Southwest in Houston and co-sponsored by H.A. Franz & Co. The Georgia BullShooter, co-sponsored by Greater Southern Distributing, took place at the Radisson Hotel in Atlanta.

Competitors in the Texas tournament came from Oklahoma and Tennessee, as well, while the Atlanta event drew players from Florida and Alabama to compete for $8,000 in prize money.

All first, second, and third place finishers qualified for spots in the $100,000 BullShooter Finals that took place over Memorial Day weekend in Chicago, Ill.

Here's a look at final results from both tournaments:

Texas

Women's Doubles: 1st—Barbara Barnes of Dallas and Irene Medina of Corpus Christi; 2nd—Patty McFarland and Virginia Riley, both of San Antonio; 3rd—Mabel Raynor of Arcadia and Debbie Gates of Freeport.

Men's Doubles: 1st—Chad Sylvan of Oklahoma City, Okla., and Vernon Farquer of Bethany, Okla.; 2nd—Luis Martinez and Gary Low, both of Corpus Christi; 3rd—Dale Perot of Carrollton and Rocket Bronder of Lewisville.

Pro Singles: 1st—Chad Sylvan of Oklahoma City, Okla.; 2nd—Luis Martinez of Corpus Christi; 3rd—Chris Helms of Cibolo.

Women's Singles: 1st—Teresa Nevills of Pasadena; 2nd—Irene Medina of Corpus Christi; 3rd—Virginia Riley of San Antonio.

Cricket Doubles: 1st—Christopher Helms of Cibolo and Monty Broadway of Universal City; 2nd—Pat Cook of Pasadena and Gary Jones of Lee City; 3rd—Robert Hirt of Houston and Thom McDonald of Carrollton.

Men's Singles: 1st—Doyle Williams of Galveston; 2nd—Rick Findlay of Highlands; 3rd—Dale Perot of Carrollton.

Mixed Triples: 1st—Teresa Nevills of Pasadena, and Donnie Ramcharan and Ram Ramcharan, both of Houston; 2nd—Kim Sanders of Arcadia, Pat Cook of Pasadena, and Gary Jones of League City; 3rd—Barbara Barnes of Dallas, Rocket Bronder of Lewisville, and Dale Perot of Carrollton.

Mixed Doubles Cricket: 1st—

Winners at the Atlanta tournament, (l-r): Brian Dickerson, Sue Swisher, and Roger Carter.

Runners up in the Mixed Triples division in Georgia, (l-r): Terry Stewart, Kimberly Gardner, and Dan Pace.

Theresa Nevills of Pasadena and Donnie Ramcharan of Houston; 2nd—Irene Medina of Corpus Christi and Rocket Bronder of Lewisville; 3rd—Dale Perot of Carrollton and Barbara Barnes of Dallas.

Georgia

Womens's Doubles: 1st—Tammy Cronan and Patricia Ray, both of Knoxville, Tenn.; 2nd—Janet Wright of Norcross and Sue Swisher of Snellville; 3rd—Wanda West of Riverdale and Jackie Ogletree of Jonesboro.

Men's Doubles: 1st—Burrell Whitley of Ward, S.C., and Joey Smith Jr. of Saraland, Ala.; 2nd—Roger Carter of Warner Robins and Brian Dickerson of Dalton; 3rd—Ray Salter of Carrollton and Jake Thompson of Opelika, Ala.

Women's Singles: 1st—Kim Meadows of Pensacola, Fla.; 2nd—Patricia Ray of Knoxville, Tenn.; 3rd—Kirsten Fenwick of Birmingham, Ala.

Men's Singles: 1st—Jack Thompson of Opelika, Ala.; 2nd—P.D. Thompson of Duluth; 3rd—Tim Donald of Pleasant Grove, Ala.

Mixed Triples: 1st—Sue Swisher of Shelville, Roger Carter of Warner Robins, and Brian Dickerson of Dalton; 2nd—Terry Stewart Sr. of Nashville, Tenn., and Kimberly Gardner Dan Pace, both of Donelson, Tenn.; 3rd—Leann Gragg of Leads, Ala., and Donald Bilbro Jr. and Donald Bilbro Sr., both of Pell City, Ala.

Cricket Doubles: 1st—Dan Pace of Donaldson, Tenn., and Terry Stewart of Nashville, Tenn.; 2nd—Pat Templeton of Augusta, Ga., and Steven Gosnell of Pinson, Ala.; 3rd—Jeremy Booth of Chatanooga, Tenn., and Jeremy Shown of Harrison, Tenn.

Pro Singles: 1st—Roger Carter of Warner Robins; 2nd—Doug Guerette of Calaway, Fla.; 3rd—Steve Goswell of Pinson, Ala.

Mixed Doubles Cricket: 1st—Roger Carter of Warner Robins and Sue Swisher of Shellville; 2nd—Dan Pace and Kimberly Gardner, both of Donaldson, Tenn.; 3rd—Patricia Ray of Knoxville, Tenn., and Steve Young of Opelika, Ala. ▲

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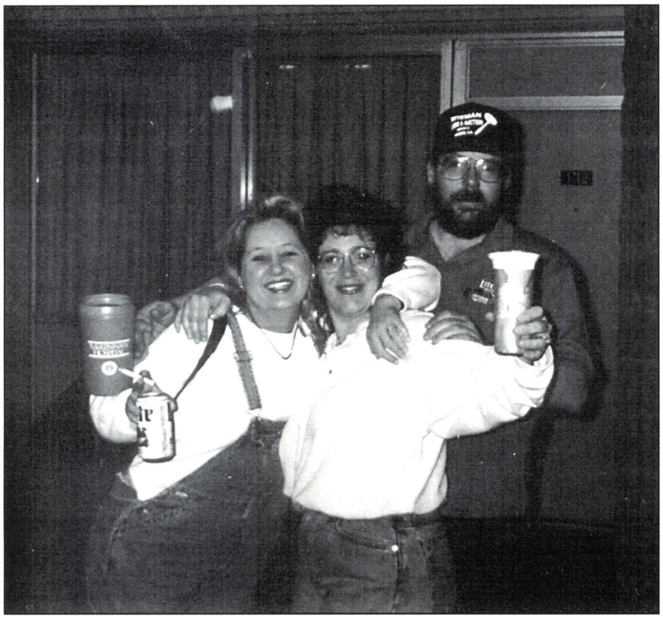
Pool and dart event held in South Dakota



Happy darters enjoy themselves at the South Dakota State Team Dart Tournament.

Perennial Masters Division champions from the Reunion Bar in Rapid City, (l-r): Chuck Brocar, John Vandegrift, Terry Pennel, and Andy Toth.

The operator members of the South Dakota Pool & Dart Tournament Corp., D & E Music, and the city of Mitchell played host once again to one of the country's most successful state dart tournaments, the South Dakota State Team Dart Tournament.

Boasting over 2,500 shooters this year, the event utilized over 100 new Valley dart boards, including 45 of Valley's new IQ model, all supplied by Hanson Distributing Co. and Valley. Over the past 11 years the tournament has quietly grown into one of the country's premier dart tournaments under the direction of D & E's Elroy Gruenewald and Dave Buckland and more recently D & E league coordinator Britt Bruner.

This continuous expansion has finally burst the seams of perennial host Mitchell, home of the tournament since 1986. The size of this year's tournament required that Bruner coordinate 12 division throughout four different tournament sites and fill hotel rooms as far out as 45 minutes from Mitchell.

In the future, the tournament will alternate between Rapid City and Sioux Falls, which organizers say should boost participation from players in those areas of the state. ▲

Eight regionals send 20 darters to Valley Gold

Eight regional qualifier tournaments for the 1996 Valley Gold added 20 more players to the list of winners headed for the North America Championships in Las Vegas, Nev., July 11-13.

Tournaments are currently being held across the country, and when it's all over thousands of electronic dart players will have had an opportunity to put their talents on display, win cash and other prizes, and go to Vegas. There, they will get a chance to compete for positions on Team USA, which will travel to Europe in the fall and participate in the Valley World Cup Championships.

Here's how those 20 darters won their way to the Valley Gold:

California

The first two weekends in March saw dual tournaments sponsored by Master Vending of Sacramento. Held at the LaRosa Club and the Onyx Club, respectively, in Roseville, the two events drew 64 men and women. At the end, the two winners were Fred Vinson and Ellen Cole.

Minnesota

Much farther to the east, two dozen players met in a qualifying event held at the Del-Win Entertainment Center in St. Joseph. Brent Reinhold and Deb Johannes emerged as winners of the competition sponsored by Bros. Music and Games of St. Cloud.

Wisconsin

A two-day qualifier held by Vacationland Venders of Wisconsin Dells at Dillinger's in Beaver Dam drew 140 entrants. When it was over, Natalie Hanson and Tim Tegal walked away as dual winners.

IP TRIPS
OPE!

Ronnie Lee and Sharon Sylvester were victorious at the qualifier held by first-time sponsor Williams Enterprises of Centralia, Ill.

WIN CHAMPIONSHIP TRIPS
TO LAS VEGAS & EUROPE

Ellen Cole and Fred Vinson secured spots in the Valley Gold when Master Vending held a tournament in Roseville, Calif.

Jeff Newell and Sharon Sonntag are also Vegas bound as a result of victories at a Valley Gold qualifier sponsored by Hastings Distributing of Milwaukee. The event was held at the Burnham Bowl in West Allis and drew a field of 37 darters.

A total of 278 players showed up for the fifth annual event sponsored by Bullseye Inc. of Madison. Some of the top players in the area where there when the first dart was thrown at The All-American Sports Bar & Grill in Janesville. Standing in the winners circle at the conclusion of the competition were Pam Dischler, Ellen Rice, Dave Kramer, and John Kuffer.

Illinois

Two first-time winners came out of the qualifier held by first-time sponsor Williams Enterprises in Centralia. Ronnie Lee and Sharon Sylvester won their Las Vegas trips at Jono's Place in Wamac against a field of 17 other players.

Michigan

Sarah Dietering and Ed Williams were victorious at the qualifier held at the Cobblestone Lounge in Flint. The competition between 12 top-notch dart players was sponsored by American Amusement and Vending, also of Flint.

Indiana

A duo of darters took a giant "Stepp" forward on their way to Las Vegas at the Homestyle Inn in Fowler when Diggers Vending of Boswell sponsored a qualifying event. Securing a place in the Valley Gold were Don and Cathy Stepp. The event drew a field of 16 competitors. ▲

MCMOA holds first annual table soccer tournament

MICHIGAN MARCH 22-24

The happy winners of the Open Mixed Doubles at the MCMOA Michigan state foosball championship, Mike Stahl and Crissie Auld, who is eight months pregnant.

The Michigan Coin Machine Operators' Association recently held its first annual table soccer championship at the Radisson Hotel in Flint, Mich. The event was co-sponsored by Tornado Table Sports of Ft. Worth, Texas, and benefitted the Consortium for Child Abuse and Neglect.

Tournament directors included Dave Courington and Larry Davis of Tornado and Scott Bright, president of MCMOA. Cleveland Coin of Livonia, Mich., pitched in by providing 20 new *Tornado 2000* machines used in the intense competition, which drew players from as far away as central Ohio.

The three-day event saw men and women, ages 13 to 50, fight for the coveted Michigan State Champion's title in a number of different categories.

During the weekend several of the area's top operators visited the event and were able to meet and exchange ideas with key personnel from Valley Recreation Products, including company president Dick Shelton and Gregg Elliot of the new Valley International Foosball Association. The operators also got a chance to talk with enthusiastic players, sparking even more new plans for diversified programs of both league and local tournament activities.

Rounding out the activities was the raffle of a new home model Tornado soccer table, which saw $300 donated to the Consortium of Child Abuse and Neglect. ▲

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Tornado pro tour hosts 500 at second '96 stop

Open Doubles winners, (l-r): Terry Moore and Bobby Diaz.

Open Women's Doubles winners Tiff Billirakis (l) and Caryn Varadinek.

Foosball enthusiasts from New York to California and Florida to Minnesota assembled at the Minneapolis Hilton and Towers recently for Tornado's Pro Tour U.S. Open. The second of Tornado's five major 1996 tournaments, this event drew 500 players, competing in 18 events, and resulted in a total of over 1,500 game entries.

Of all the competitors, three turned in exceptional performances. Both Terry Moore of Chicago and Todd Loffredo of Clearwater, Fla., were the big winners among the men. Each had a first and a second place finish in the two main events, the Open Singles and Open Doubles. Loffredo edged out Moore in the singles; Moore reversed the positioning in the doubles with partner Bobby Diaz of Florida. Loffredo finished second with partner Scotty Wydman of Arizona.

The outstanding female player was Christina Fuchs of Los Angeles. She won the Women's Open Singles and Open Mixed Event with Diaz. Teaming up with Liz Hill of Oklahoma, she also finished second in the Open Women's Doubles.

Other winners included Bobi Papageorgio and Gregg Perrie in the Open Mixed Event; Caryn Varadinek and Tiff Billirakis in Open Women's Doubles; and Greg Perrie and Don Chalifoux in the 35-and-Over competition.

Almost $35,000 in cash and other awards were distributed to the winners in the 18 categories. In Open Singles and Open Doubles, cash awards went to those finishing from first through 16th. Top cash prizes were $1,5000 for the winners in Open Singles and Open Doubles.

Tornado's tournament program began in 1973 and has grown to five Tornado-sponsored tournaments on the schedule each year. Coming events include the National Championships in New Orleans this summer and the $100,000 World Championships in Dallas on Labor Day. ▲

California mega tourney headlines Valley events

From left: Phil Scarborough of Star Service, winner Gina Corral, Jim Roe of Valley, winner Claudia Limon, and Larry Hill of Darts & Things at the California qualifier.

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Alan Smith was one of the big winners in Palm Harbor, Fla.

Southern California will be well represented at the 1996 Valley Gold North American Championships with 12 men and 12 women winning spots in the finals at an area qualifier sponsored by eight operators in the southern part of the state.

Heading for Las Vegas are Juan Mandrigal, Dean Evans, Mike Christian, Brian Howes, John Lee, Mike Larue, Tom Romandi, Mark Evans, Richard Ontiveros, Jeff Bird, Sean Downs, and Robert Jones, Mary Lacey, Claudia Limon, Peg Quezada, Silvia Ontiveros, Julie Mellon, Michele Mellor, Loraine Cleg, Gina Corral, Sandy Frantz, Debbie Eskin, Kathy Johnson, and Linda Cal.

The event was held at the Old World Restaurant in Huntington Beach, and a total of 233 players enrolled. Sponsoring the event were Star Service, Southern California Darts, Dart Works, Darts Elite, Game Exchange, Mental Amusements, Toby Dart, and Darts & Things.

The Valley Gold will be held July 11-13 in Las Vegas. Here's a look at some additional events around the country:

Florida

Alan Smith and Carol Huffman worked their way through the field of 33 darters who met at BJs in Palm Harbor to come out on top. Sponsored by Gulf Coast Amusements of Gulfport, the event was marked by enthusiasm, cooperation, and good sportsmanship that helped ensure a successful tournament.

Wisconsin

A weekend-long qualifying tournament by Midstate Amusements of Oshkosh drew 375 players to Planet Perk in the same city, and when it was over the winners were Sherry Brinkman and Rick Landvatter. A little farther south in Dairyland at Root River Lanes in Franklin, Johnny Mielcarek and Carolyn Nessman were triumphant at the end in a qualifier sponsored by Red's Novelty of West Allis.

Hawaii

Six Vegas-bound winners will have a unique perspective on their trip to the Valley Gold. Unlike most of their competition, they will travel east to compete after prevailing at the Player Sportsbar in Honolulu. The winners of the event sponsored by Dart Systems Hawaii were Randa Dias, Julie Haraga, Kendall Yu, Denver Kesner, Colin Sims, and Sabrina Mokuahi.

Nevada

A pair of tournament winners were just a step away from the finals already, but they made their big move when they won their matches in a split tournament in Las Vegas. Both events were sponsored by a group of four local operators: Dart-4-U, Pinball & Video Game, Able Amusement, and D & B Billiards. Karen Borden earned her spot at Irene's, while Mike Sanders picked up his ticket to the finals at Saddle and Spurs.

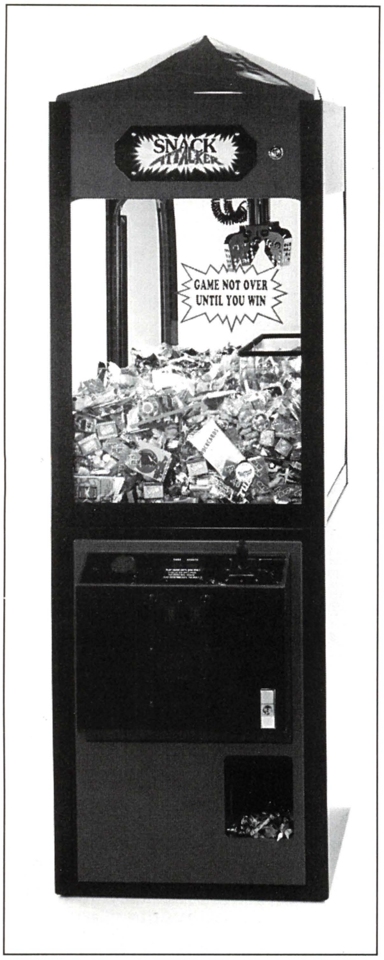
Iowa

Beth Davis and Doug Friedline were winners at a three-location event in Ames sponsored by K.D. Amusement. The events drew 34 men and women and were held at The Corner Pocket, Whiskey River Bar, and Sportsman's Lounge.

South Dakota

A quartet of darters picked up spots in the final at the American Legion Hall in Tea. Music Service of South Dakota in Brookings sponsored the event. Winners were James Goetschius, Dave Taylor, Virginia Day, and Bev LaBore. ▲

New AGE cranes



Advanced Games and Engineering introduces all new versions of its two standard models, the *Snack Attacker* candy crane and *Challenger* toy fill machine.

Improvements to the company's crane products include special accommodations for plush toys, improved win sensing, bigger capacity, easier servicing, additional security, and new attraction features. The changes are the result of input sought out from operators by AGE.

A key new feature of the *Snack Attacker* and *Challenger* is a larger 7-1/2"-square drop chute that will accommodate high-value plush toys or other large and unusually shaped prizes. The drop chute does not narrow so the full area is available for awards.

Other new features include a full area win sensor to eliminate extra plays and prize duplication in the Winner-Every-Time mode, an increased fill area height of 13", an optional special claw to handle plush prizes, a lighted roof dome, a tilt sensor, and additional sound effects. In addition to major new machine features, AGE has also introduced 36"-wide versions of both cranes, which are available in three color schemes.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Advanced Games & Engineering, 1231 NE 8th Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304; (305) 527-0907; fax (305) 527-0226.

LaserStar Venus

Compact Disc

Rowe Intl. announces the release of its latest LaserStar CD jukebox, the *LaserStar Venus*, a Classical-style jukebox that combines a nostalgic look with the most up-to-date technology.

The new title display with 12 full-sized CD jackets displayed beside easy-to-read title strips and theatrical halo lighting is designed to merchandise music and stimulate maximum customer play. Motor-driven pages flip vertically for easier reading and will accommodate up to 100 CDs and title strips. In the attract mode the pages turn automatically or move to a specific page number.

Atop the *LaserStar Venus* and within a multireflective enclosure, three discs rotate in a rainbow of color for dramatic impact. Set on autoplay, the *Venus* automatically plays a random or pre-selected track at specific time intervals. The jukebox is equipped with a Rowe bill acceptor, takes $1 and $5 bills, and has a 500-bill stacker.

Optional features include a remote control with song selection and volume and reject controls, as well as an optional printer kit, providing full MIS reports that include cash totals, selection frequency, and the condition of every disc. Recommended printers may be purchased in your local marketplace.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Rowe Intl., 1500 Union Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507; (616) 243-3633; fax (616) 243-3860.

Strikers 1945, Pang 3

Worldwide Video Entertainment presents two affordable video kits, the World War II upright flying game *Strikers 1945* and the two-player horizontal game *Pang 3.*

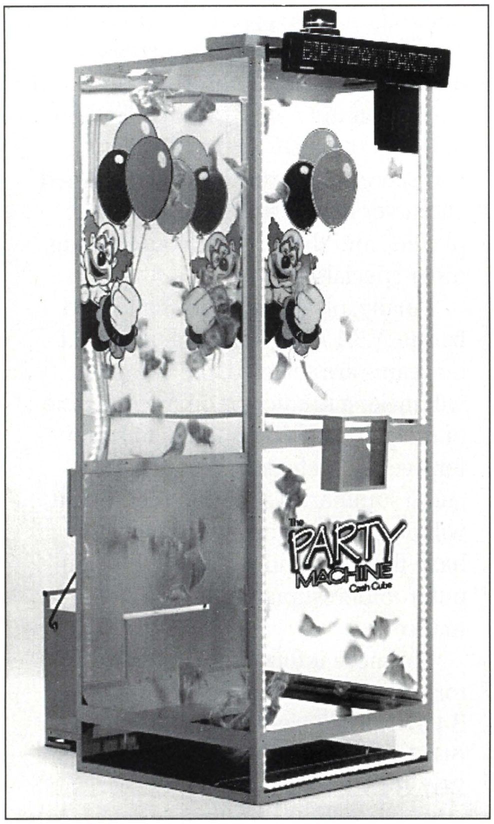
Strikers 1945 is a two-player interactive game that utilizes one joystick and two buttons per player. It features continuous buy-in, eight stages, and six WWII vintage fighter planes to choose from. Each plane has its own special weapons.

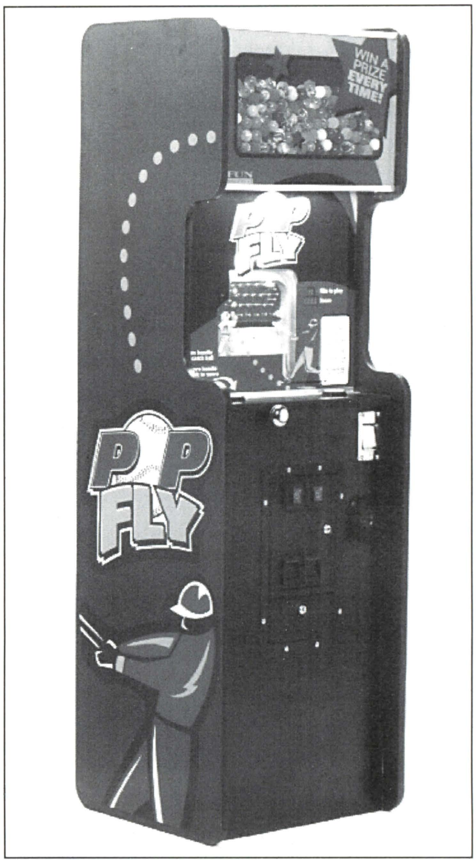
Pang 3 is being presented by Worldwide through a licensing deal with the Mitchell Corp. of Japan for exclusive domestic distribution. This game is the latest in a successful series of *Pang* games formerly known in the United States as *Super Buster Bros.*

The game has one joystick and one button per player and features 100 stages in panic mode and 50 stages in normal mode.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Worldwide Video Entertainment, 4780-B Mission Gorge Place, San Diego, CA 92120; (619) 229-2200 or (800) 729-6979; fax (619) 229-2202.

Pop Fly, Party Machine





Fun Industries introduces two new products, the prize vending amusement game *Pop Fly* and the newest addition to its line of Cash Cubes, *The Party Machine.*

Pop Fly is a baseball-themed pachinko-styled skill game that makes the player slide a simulated baseball outfielder in two directions with a control knob as he tries to catch the pop fly that falls through a series of pins.

Each correct catch scores 100 points. Scores can be digitally set to vend prizes at any point levels, including giving the prize right away as soon as the player coins up.

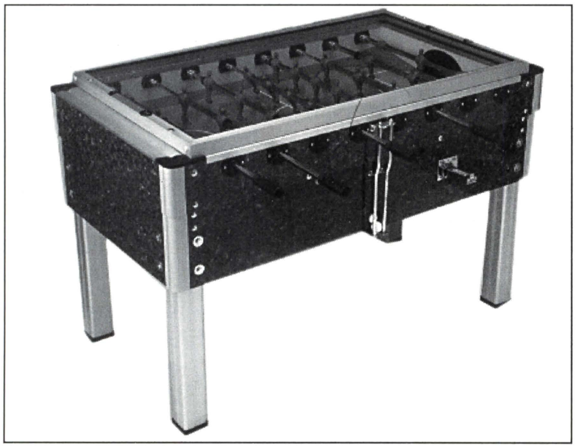
Prizes can be super bounce balls, gumballs, candy, or prize capsules. The game also offers winners extended play and bonus prizes. *Pop Fly* has a dramatic black, red, and blue appearance and features an extra large vend capacity and realistic baseball sound effects, adding to the overall excitement of the game. The game has a footprint of 21" x 21".

Sporting a birthday party theme, the *Party Machine* features a bright yellow powder coat finish with cheerful clowns and balloons. It has state-of-the-art digital electronics that include an automatic attract mode and easy one-button operation. Also featured is an optional built-in dolly system.

The *Party Machine* is 32-1/2 " wide and able to fit through any standard doorway. It is constructed as a one-piece unit and requires no setup. It is also fully carpeted, has a digital countdown, and offers the Stock-It-Pocket to control the amount of winnings.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Fun Industries Inc., 627 15th Ave., East Moline, IL 61224; (309) 755-5021 or (800) 747-1444; fax (309) 755-1684.

J.J. Soccer Table

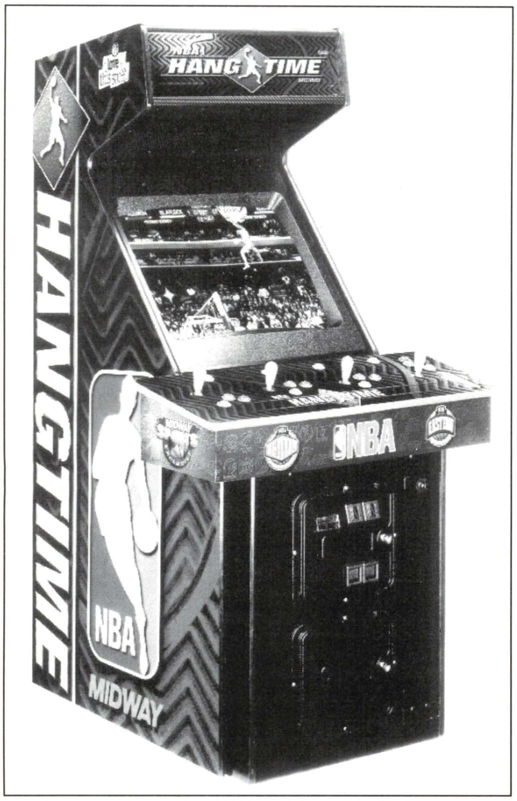


James Industries announces its exclusive distributorship of a new glass top foosball table, the *J.J. Soccer*, which can be seen regularly on the television situation comedy "Friends."

The table, which has been a main focal point of a number of episodes, features double tempered glass, ball theft protector, ESD coin chute, interchangeable bushing, steel coil springs, aluminum legs, and telescopic rods with ball bearings. A one-year warranty on parts is also being offered.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact James Industries Inc., 1619 Colonial Parkway, Inverness, IL 60067; (708) 358-8000; fax (708) 358-8005.

NBA Hang Time



Midway Mfg. announces the latest in its series of NBA-licensed basketball video games, *NBA Hang Time*. The game, which was designed by the same team that produced *NBA Jam* and *NBA Jam Tournament Edition*, features two-on-two full-court basketball action between players right off the rosters of NBA teams.

Double dunks, spin moves, hook shots, and an outdoor court atop a towering skyscraper are among the new game play options. *NBA Hang Time* also has expanded team rosters, new secret codes, new secret characters, an NBA trivia contest built into the game, and original songs from renowned rapper M. Doc. There is even a Create-a-Player option that allows players to customize their own character for use in the game.

Midway will be offering a low-cost upgrade to *NBA Hang Time* in November to coincide with the beginning of the 1996-97 NBA season. It will include rookies and reconcile trades made during the previous season.

Other features include increased animation scale, 40 percent more players on the roster, improved audio delivered by a DCS Sound System, and secret codes that activate enlarged character heads, super dunks, secret players, and the outdoor court among other specialties.

Finally, players will be challenged by the *NBA Hang Time* computer. After teams are selected, the computer will make a prediction on the outcome of the game based on the detailed offensive and defensive records and game summaries stored in memory. It will be up to players to prove they have the skills and show that the computer underestimated their performance.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Midway Mfg. Co., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240; fax (312) 267-8435.

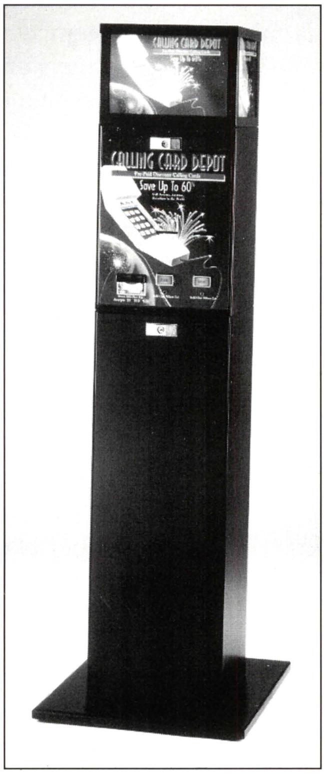
Calling Card Depot series

Advanced Games & Engineering has introduced three vending machines to serve the new prepaid long-distance phone card market. These new AGE *Calling Card Depot* machines fit in with most upscale retail settings, such as hotels, restaurants, and malls.

The machines can also provide years of dependable service for high traffic locations like convenience stores, malls, supermarkets, truck stops, gas stations, college campuses, transportation terminals, and hospitals.

Calling Card Depot machines come in one-column, two-column, and three-column versions to hold 200 cards (Model 801), 400 cards (Model 802), and 600 cards (Model 803) respectively. Bill validators with built-in stackers accommodate up to 300 bills, and an optional 600-bill stacker is available.

Graphics can be customized, and signs include a back lit four-sided marquee box with color graphic inserts that attaches to the main cabinet of the two-column model. An optional vacuum fluorescent dot matrix for both the two- and three-column model is also available.



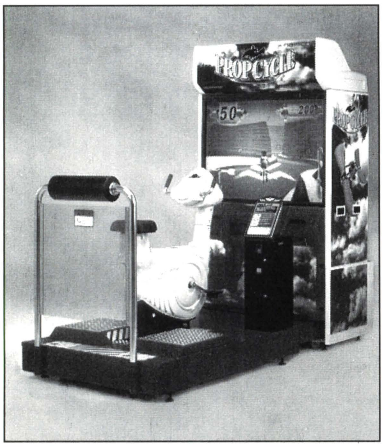
Calling Card Depot machines are built of 14-gauge galvannealed steel and rustproofed inside and out to automotive industry standards for years of durable, tamperproof service. They come equipped with a recessed T-handle locking system and a tip and theft-prevention auto alarm system with powerful siren.

The units can be wall-mounted or can be purchased with optional bases that also provide additional storage capacity. The rectangular stand features a locking storage cabinet, and the tapered base has an open area in the rear. Both areas are suitable for installing heavy weights for added security.

AGE provides the cards that are loaded into the machines. Vendor/operators can purchase $10 and $20 cards for $4.50 and $9 respectively. Phone service is provided by LDDS, the nation's fourth largest carrier. Locations are normally paid a commission of $1 for each $10 and $2 for each $20 card sold.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact AGE, 1231 NE 8th Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304; (305) 527-0907; fax (305) 527-0226.

Prop Cycle, Time Crisis upright



Namco releases *Prop Cycles*, the newest addition to its High Touch simulator line of games, as well as an upright version of the gun game *Time Crisis*.

The High Touch simulator line incorporates the latest in high tech graphics and player involvement. *Prop Cycle* simulates the hang-gliding/ultra-light flying experience.

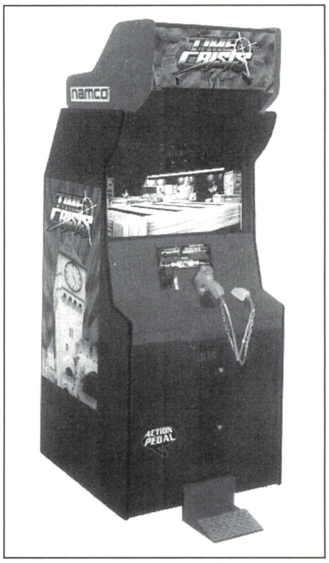
A bike mechanism situated in the 50" cabinet offers both rolling and pitching to amplify the overall flying experience. Pedal controls manipulate the speed, while handle controls determine the direction. As the player pedals there is a variable speed fan that blows according to the speed of the flyer simulating the rush of the wind through the player's hair. Namco's Super System 22 is the power house behind the graphics of this one-player game. The object of the game is to pop as many hot air balloons in the time provided in order to continue to the next stage.

Pilots select from two modes: novice or advanced. In the novice mode pilots choose from one of three levels and race from balloon to balloon in trying to achieve the best score. In the advanced mode, pilots try to move from one stage to the next by hitting an allotted number of balloons; when the third level is completed, pilots attempt to complete the final Solitar level.

There are four levels of difficulty to select from: beginner, novice, intermediate, and advance. There are also several types of balloons in each level which offer points, extended time, and mystery surprises.

Also available from Namco is a standard size upright cabinet version of the gun game *Time Crisis*. Along with a special pedal feature that gives players the ability to duck into a defensive position, the game also offers free lives when players score 40 consecutive direct hits.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Namco-America, 877 Supreme Drive, Bensenville, IL 60106; (708) 238-2248; fax (708) 238-9333.



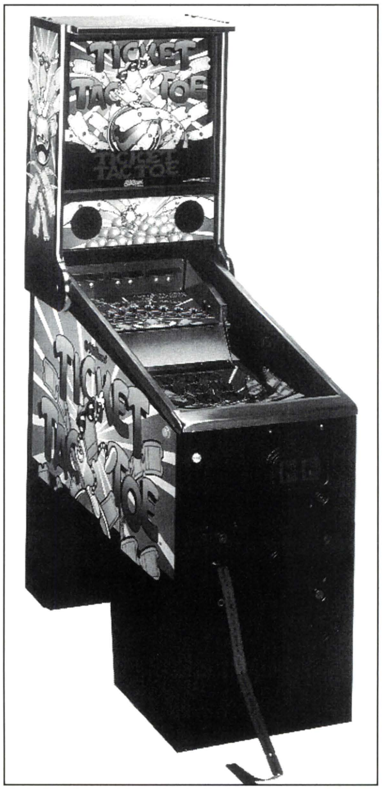
Ticket-Tac-Toe

Williams Electronics introduces its newest redemption game that has a familiar pinball machine look to it, *Ticket-Tac-Toe*. The game is also based on the same flipper system standard to pin games.

Ticket-Tac-Toe combines state-of-the-art sound and animation with the traditional appeal of the game Tic-Tac-Toe. The upper playfield features a row of nine holes that correspond to spaces on the board on the lower playfield. Players use flippers to shoot a pinball into the holes, each one illuminating the corresponding space on the lower playfield.

Players try to hit shots that will light a combination of spaces that will reward them with tickets. Each credit allows players to score three shots. There is no limit on the number of balls a player can use to make three shots.

The game offers fours ways to win tickets, including two progressive jackpots. Players can win the Quick Jackpot of multiple tickets by hitting the shot that lights a highlighted space with their first shot of the game. If the player cannot hit the highlighted space with their first shot, the minijackpot grows and is available to the next player. Players also are awarded tickets the first time they light a line of three spaces in a row. The third option for winning tickets is to light the four corner spaces on the playfield.

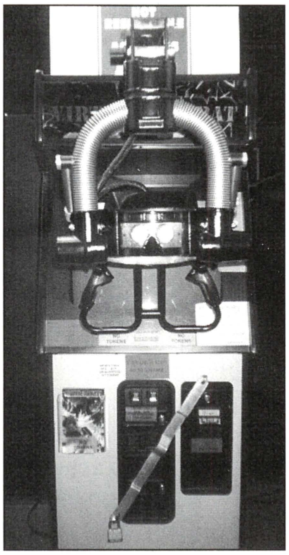


The ultimate goal for players is to win the Jackpot!. The Jackpot! is won by lighting all nine spaces. The fewer number of balls it takes to light the nine spaces, the larger the number of tickets awarded.

Other features include entertaining animation and the friendly voice of Tommy Ticket heard on the game's DCS Sound System.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Williams Electronics, 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240; fax (312) 267-8435.

V-Zone



Virtual Orbit Amusements announces its exclusive distributorship of the *V-Zone* virtual reality arcade game, manufactured by Reality Concepts Inc.

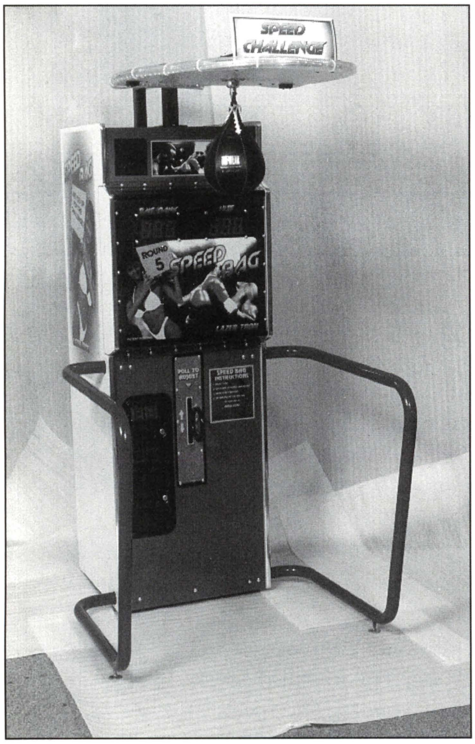
The *V-Zone* unit features a slightly modified arcade game cabinet with built-in heavy duty supports for the 85-pound boom mounted display V-Scope. The display has 90 degrees of vertical range with 330 degrees of lateral motion. With dimensions of 27" wide x 30" deep x 78" tall, the unit will accommodate almost any street location.

The cabinet comes standard with a high-resolution 25" monitor so onlookers can follow along and see the live radar tracking of the enemy surrounding the player in their visor on the monitor screen. Each unit has two coin acceptors and a bill validator, which accepts $1, $5, and $10 bills.

V-Zone is designed for linking multiple users and is driven by two 26-bit microprocessors and two Motorola 32-bit microprocessors. The unit is covered by a limited warranty for one year and a 90-day warranty on parts and labor.

For more information, contact Virtual Orbit Amusements, 3653 Beech Down Drive, Chantilly, VA 22021; (703) 471-5851; fax (703) 471-7067.

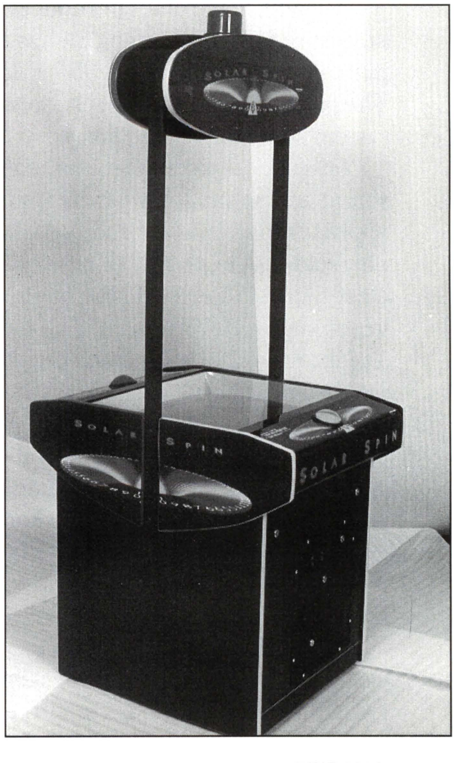
Speed Bag, Solar Spin



Acclaim Coin-Op's novelty division, formerly Lazer-Tron, presents its two newest offerings: *Speed Bag* and *Solar Spin.*

Speed Bag is a quick hitting boxing game that challenges players to hit the bag as many times as they can; the game works well in non-redemption and non-arcade locations. The height of the bag is adjustable for players of any height or age. *Speed Bag* focuses on speed not power and thus promotes non-violent competition among friends.

Other features include superior music and graphics, fully protective padding, a bag that locks into upright position between game, and an optional ticket dispenser.



Solar Spin is a two-player video skill stop redemption game. Players have one chance to stop the spinning light bar that goes around the wheel. The goal is to stop the light bar on the Jackpot slot, or on the Insta-Prize surprise slot.

Insta-Prize allows players to instantly win large prizes on a single coin. Prizes can include gift certificates, bikes, stereos, or any other prize the location would like to merchandise such as cokes or pizzas. This feature is fully operator programmable and does not affect the overall payout of the game.

Insta-Prize will also allow non-arcade or non-redemption locations like bars, pizza parlors, and convenience stores to use skill games.

Other features include excellent graphics and special effects, no moving parts, future kit updates for the cabinet, and a built-in progressive jackpot.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Acclaim Coin-Op Entertainment, 4430 Willow Road, Pleasanton, CA 94588; (510) 460-0873; fax (510) 460-0365.

Barb Wire

With its newest Gottlieb pinball release *Barb Wire*, Premier Technology explores Steel Harbor, a city in the not-too-distant future that has been devastated by civil war in a world where biology is used to kill not cure.

This translation of a feature film into a pin game puts players in the position of helping Barb locate missing contact lenses while being engaged in a continuous attack on the sinister Big Fatso and the Congressional Directorate.

The film of the same name, which stars international phenomenon Pamela Anderson Lee as Barb Wire, was released domestically on May 3.

Most of the rounds are entered with an attack, including a hit on Big Fatso when "begin round" is flashing. Multiball is featured in six of the nine rounds with a built-in guarantee of at least one multiball round per game. If the player fails to enter a multiball round on the first two balls the game will automatically enter the Crash the Tolls multiball round on the last ball. Skilled players will be challenged to complete the combination and skill shots while attempting to reach the more difficult rounds.

Created by the same team that produced *Big Hurt, Shaq Attaq*, and *Freddy Krueger*, this model introduces a new flipper plunger link material that further improves the flipper system.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Premier Technology, 759 Industrial Drive, Bensenville, IL 60106; (708) 350-0400; fax (708) 350-1097.

Gottlieb
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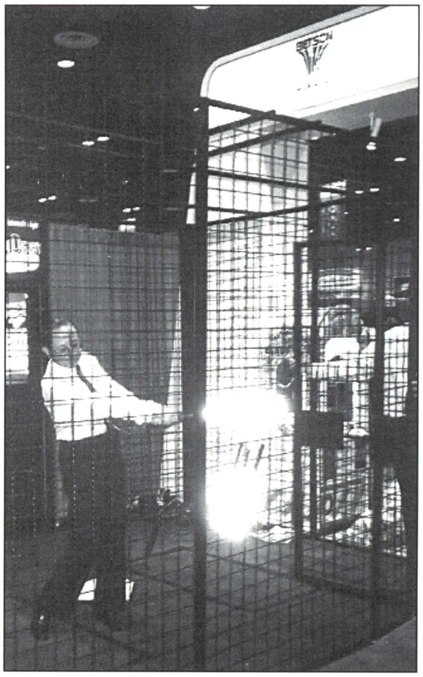
BARB WIRE
BARB WIRE

VR Home Run Derby



Innovative Concepts in Entertainment announces *VR Home Run Derby*, a breakthrough arcade product that lets players use a real bat, without wires, to swing at simulated pitches.

The fully-rendered 3-D game, licensed from Interactive Light, relies on infrared sensors to accurately measure human motion; all facets of the baseball hitting experience are included from pitch location and velocity to the timing, location, speed, and motion of the swing.

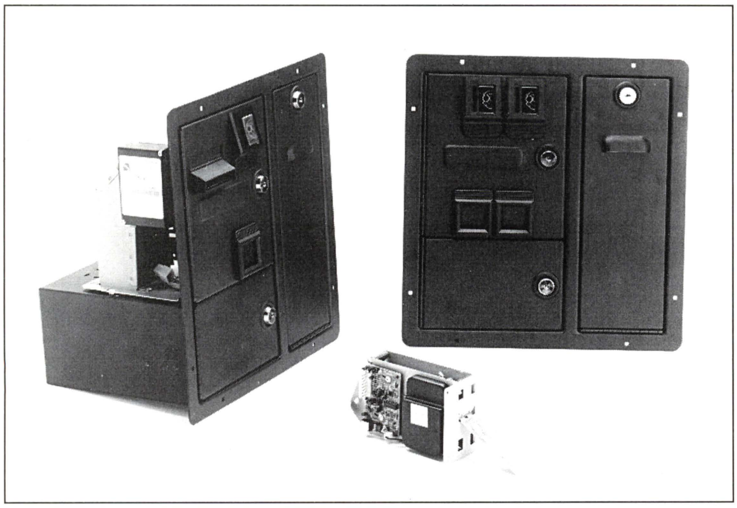
A sensor unit, positioned above a real home plate, emits three cone-shaped beams that triangulate whether a swing would generate a home run, pop-up, line drive, grounder, or bunt as well as how far and in what direction the ball would be hit.

The same concept will be applied to a series of sports games, and upgrades will be sold separately with additional features. The bundled software, for example, that comes with the baseball system lets batters hit. Scoring is based on the distances the balls fly, not on runs scored.

Future software enhancements will allow several players to compete in *VR Home Run Derby*, give artificial intelligence to fielders and runners to enable coin-op charges for play by innings, allow online competition, and add images of real-world players, stadiums, and Major League logos.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact ICE, 10123 Main St., Clarence, WY 14031; (716) 759-0370; fax (716) 759-0390.

Entropy Triple Door



Entropy Intl., a coin door supplier for Williams and Bally pinball games for the past seven years, introduces the Entropy Triple Door, combining separate doors for coin acceptors, a cash box, and a ticket dispenser all in one frame.

Security features include a hot rolled steel frame, cold rolled steel doors, tubular locks, and a triple locking mechanism on the cashbox. The new door has a cashbox that can hold 2,650 quarters and an extra large ticket shroud which prevents jams. Dollar bill retrofit kits are available.

Entropy also offers durable zinc die-cast reject bezels, easy to remove buttons, and a ticket door that allows a 90-degree angle for easy service on the new door.

For more information, contact Entropy Intl. Inc., 242 W. Devon Ave., Bensenville, IL 60106; (708) 616-1615 or (800) 241-0633; fax (708) 616-1866.

Softplay component parts

Ashland Plastics/Ashland Roto Mold announces a new proprietary line of plastic component parts for the soft contained playground manufacturer. The products, currently manufactured in Charlotte, N.C., include various shapes in a variety of well-known colors.

These component products are manufactured by the rotational molding process. Components include straight tubes, elbows, tees, and junctions as well as accessory items including entry stairs, shoe keepers, etc.

The design and manufacture of the products provides the easiest fit and best dimensional stability, and the company also provides design assistance and custom molding capabilities for rotational molding applications.

For more information, contact Ashland Plastics/Ashland Roto Mold 1813 Orange Road, P.O. Box 368, Ashland, OH 44805; (419) 281-4929; fax (419) 281-5317.

Advantage Series accounting

Armor Systems presents its new Advantage Series accounting system software with flexibile design and interactive modular abilities developed to handle the needs of most service-oriented businesses.

The Time Billing module has been designed to help service providers bill for their time and allows corporations to gain better cost and profit knowledge by accurately tracking their resources, projects, and clients that are least and most profitable. The Time Billing module produces several different types of reports including variance and pre-billing reports and profit analysis.

Features include tracking an unlimited number of clients, handling escrow, retainer, or prepayment accounting; consolidating invoices by client or project; and providing instant access to all current client and project balances. It also automatically charges the correct amount for each employee based on the procedure performed and offers a unique toggle switch to change function.

For more information, contact Armor Systems Inc., 1626 W. Airport Blvd., Sanford, FL 32773-4814; (407) 323-9787; fax (407) 330-0442.

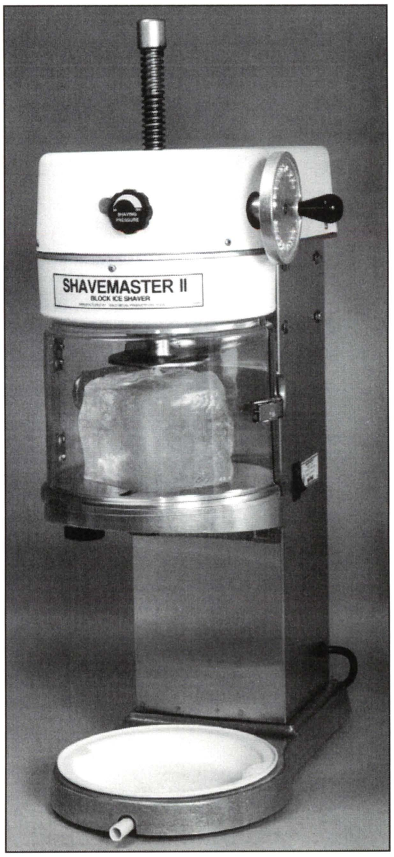
Shavemaster II

Gold Medal Products has developed a new way to help generate revenue in a snack food operation: sell ice using the *Shavemaster II* Block Ice Shaver and cash in on the Hawaiian shaved ice craze.

The *Shavemaster II* is ideal for producing shaved ice confections at any high-volume location. The shaver turns four to six pounds of ice over a stainless steel blade creating an extremely fine ice that will hold tropical flavors.

A U.L. and N.S.F. listing assures the machine's safety, and a safety switch prevents operation when the hopper door is opened. The shaver is constructed of stainless steel, cast stainless steel, cast aluminum, and plated pulleys to prevent rust. A brightly colored decal will help merchandise the servings.

For more information, contact Gold Medal Products Co., 2001 Dalton Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45214; (513) 381-1313 or (800) 543-0862; fax (513) 381-1570. ▲



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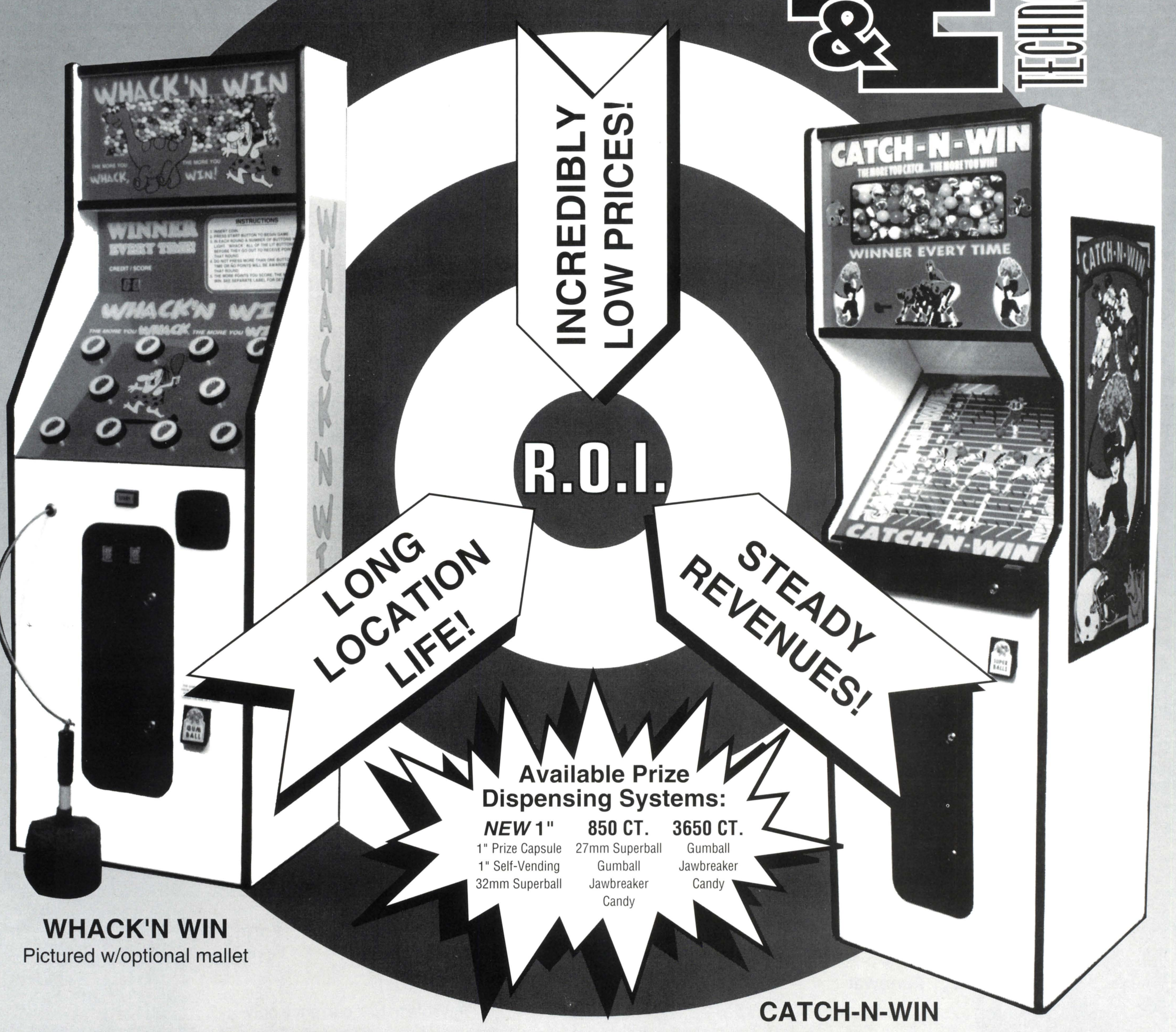

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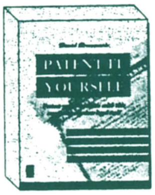

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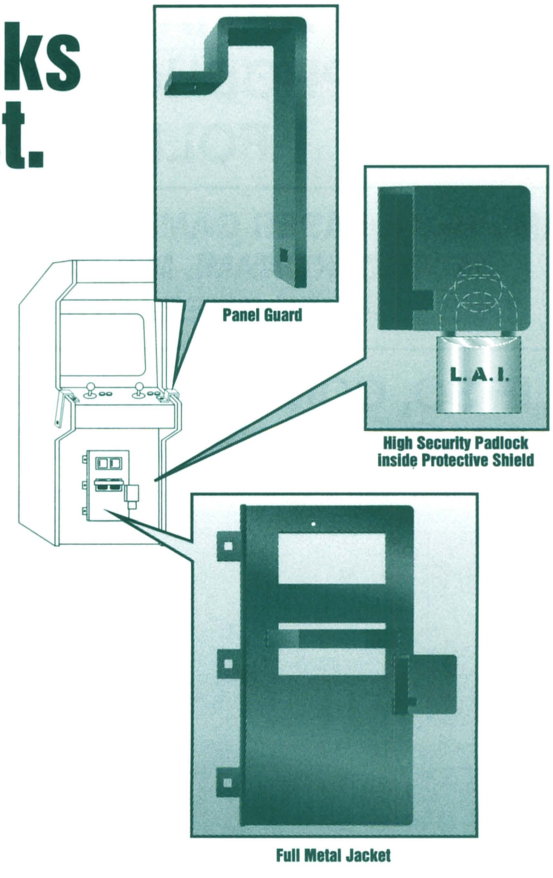

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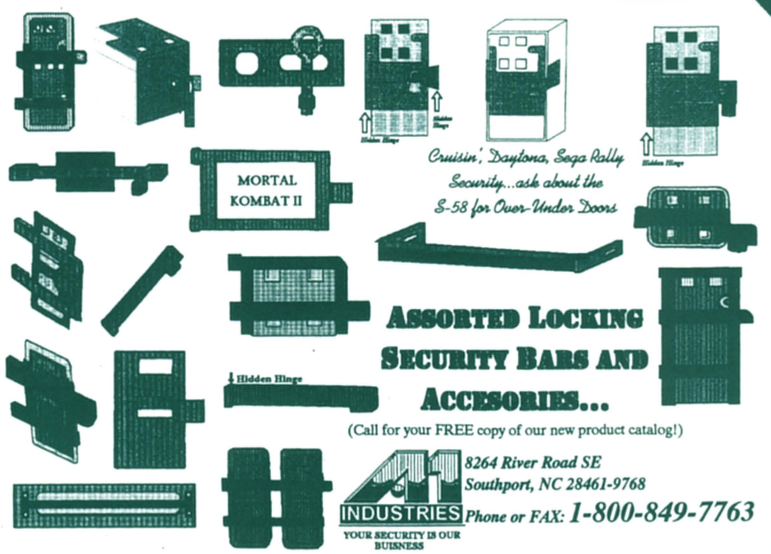

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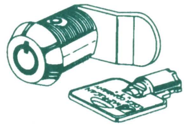

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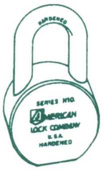
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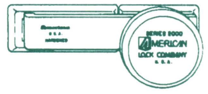
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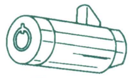

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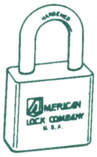
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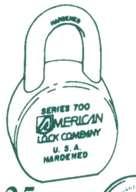
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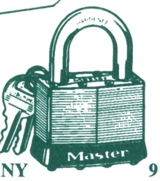

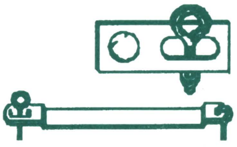

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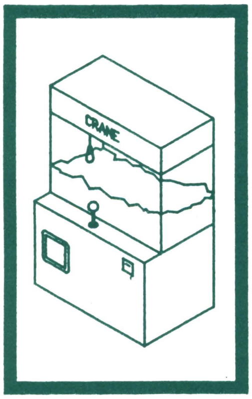

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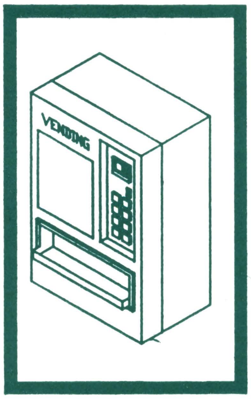

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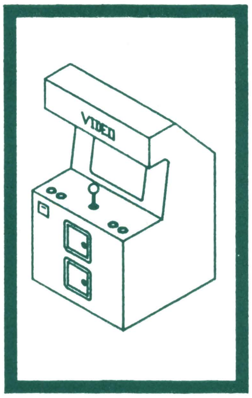

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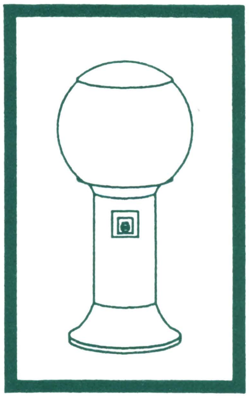

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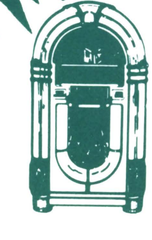

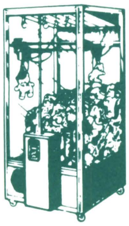

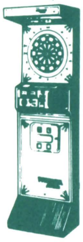

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JULY	6 Indianapolis, Indiana National Guard Armory 3912 W. Minnnesota Indianapolis, IN	13 Des Moines, Iowa (Johnston) Nat. Guard Armory Miller Armory Johnston, IA	20 Fullerton, California 2116 E. Walnut Ave. Fullerton, CA	26 27 28 Las Vegas, Nevada Pinball Fantasy 96 26-27-28 Auction on 27 Rivera Hotel, NV	
AUGUST	3 Louisville, Kentucky Common Wealth Conv. Cir. 221 Fourth Ave. Hall # C Louisville, KY	10 Chicago, Illinois St. Charles Kane County Fair St. Charles Industrial Bldg. & Electric, IL	17 Orlando, Florida Central Fl. Fairground 4603 West Colonial Dr. Orlando, Exhibit Hall	24 Fullerton, California 2116 E. Walnut Ave. Fullerton, CA	31 Dallas/Mesquite, Texas 800 BigTown Mall Mesquite, TX Expo Hall
SEPTEMBER	7 Atlanta, Georgia National Guard Armory 3736 Durham Park Rd. Decatur, GA	21 Columbus, Ohio National Guard Armory 2825 W. Dublin-Granville Rd. Columbus, OH	28 Fullerton, California 2116 E. Walnut Ave. Fullerton, CA		
OCTOBER	5 San Diego, California UAW Hall # 506 2266 San Diego Ave. Old Town, San Diego	12 St. Charles, Missouri 1355 So. Fifth Street St. Charles, MO Exhibition Hall	19 Fullerton, California 2116 E. Walnut Ave. Fullerton, CA	26 Sacramento, California Placer County Fgrds. 800 All American Blvd. Roseville, Jones Hall	
NOVEMBER	9 Orlando, Florida Central Fl. Fairground 4603 West Colonial Dr. Orlando, Exhibit Hall	16 Dallas/Mesquite,Texas 800 Big Town Mall Mesquite, TX Expo Hall	23 Fullerton, California 2116 E. Walnut Ave. Fullerton, CA		
DECEMBER	7 Miami, Florida Special Auction Location TBA	14 Fullerton, California 2116 E. Walnut Ave. Fullerton, CA	21 San Jose, California Santa Clara Fairground Gateway Hall, 344 Tully Rd. San Jose, CA		

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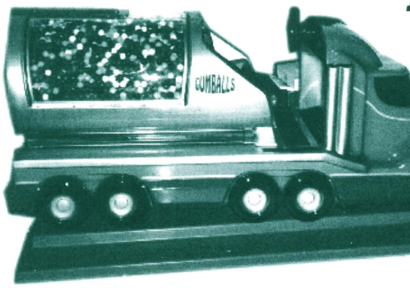

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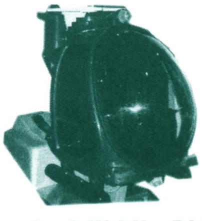

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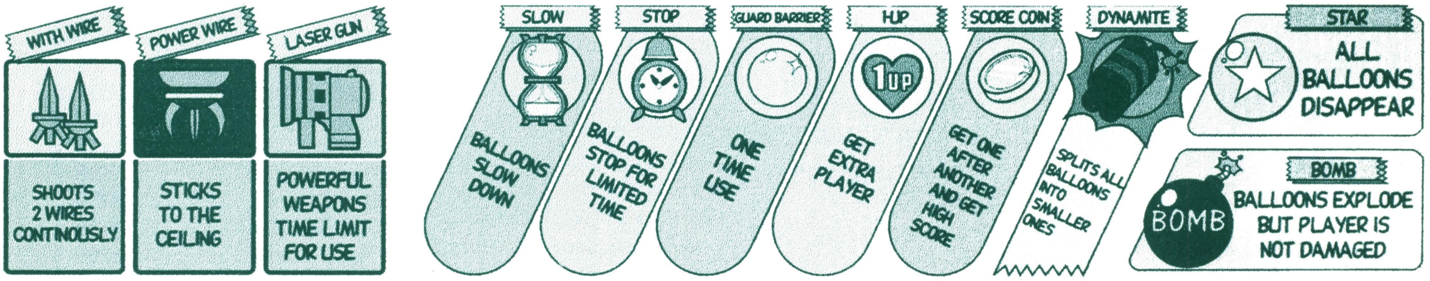
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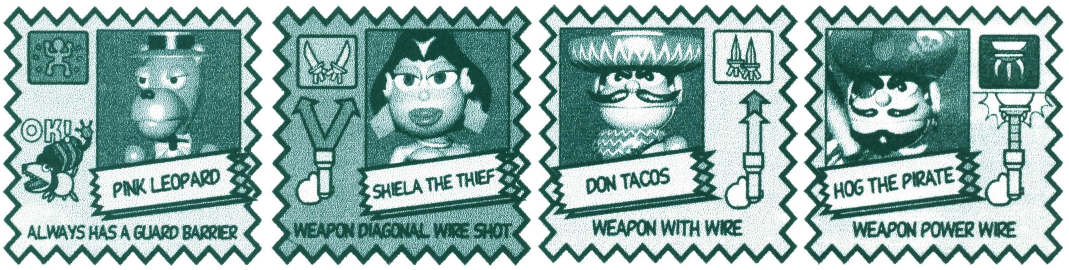
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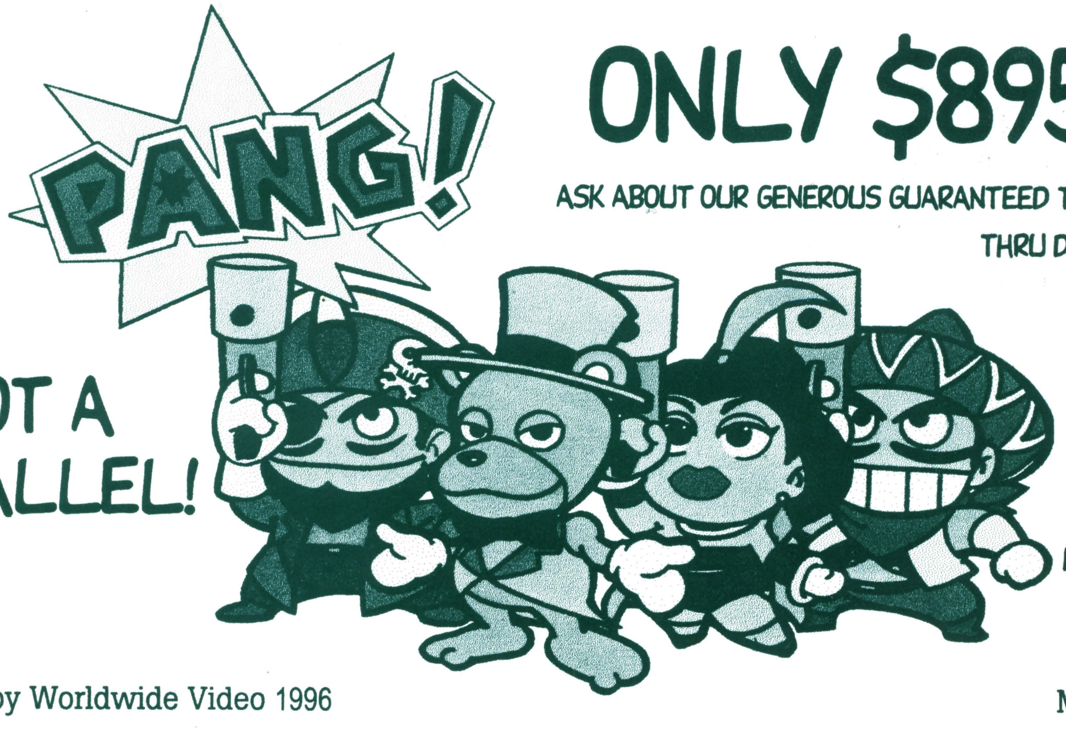

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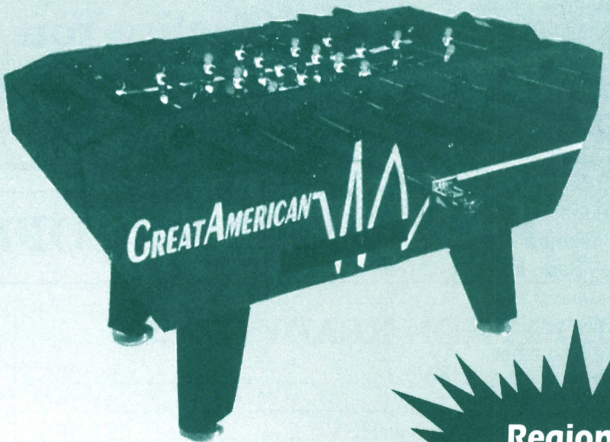

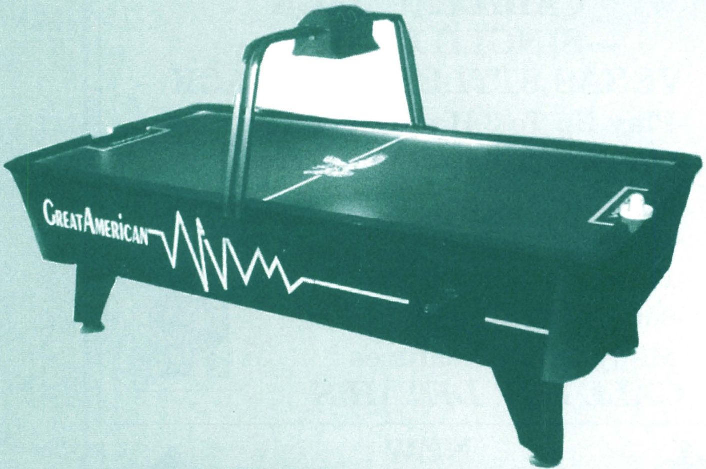

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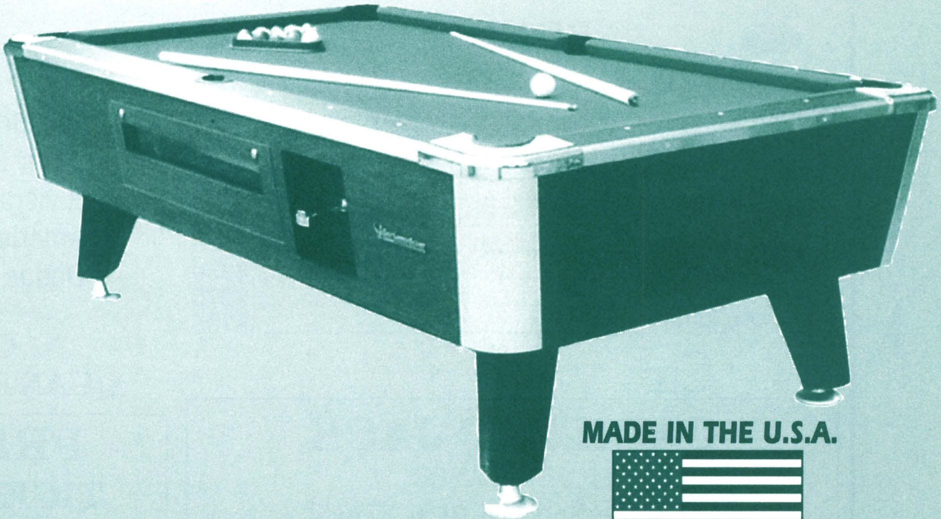

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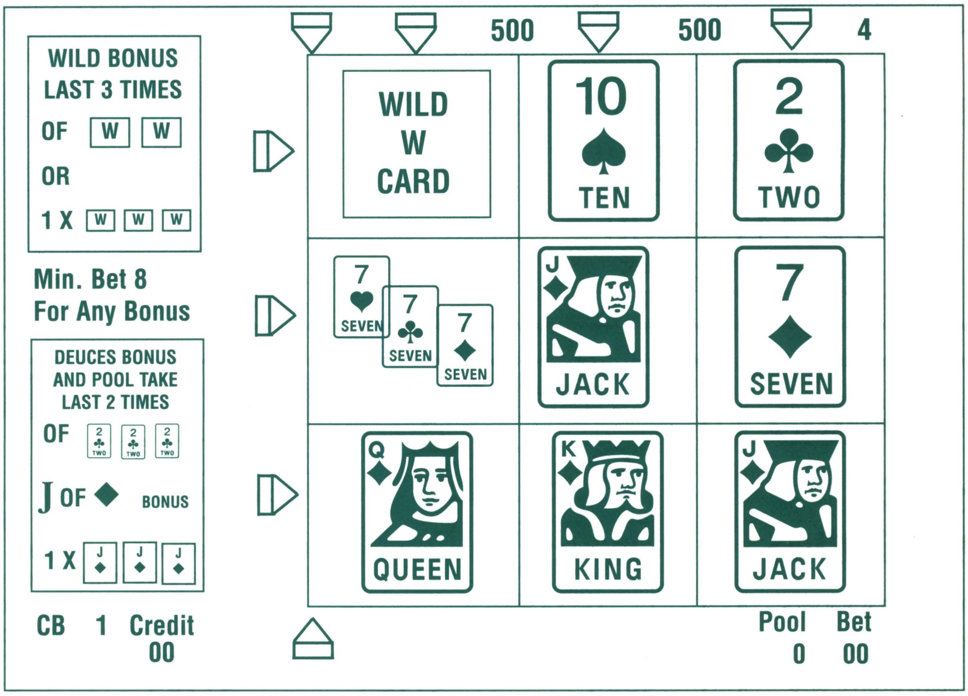

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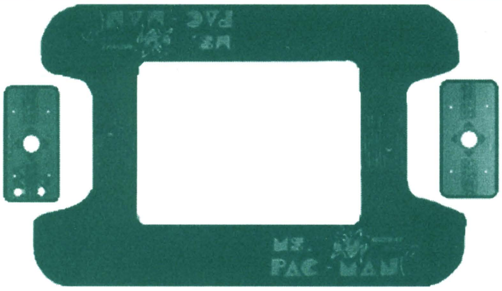

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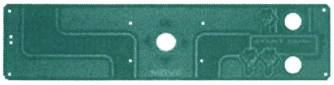

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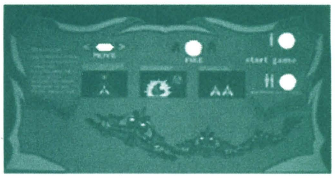

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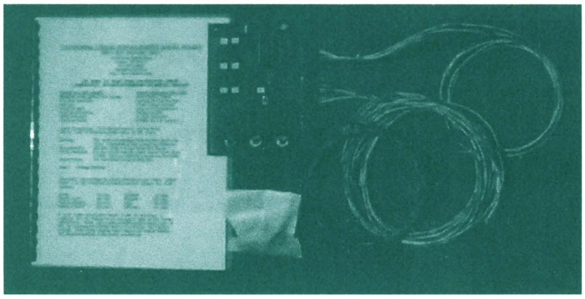

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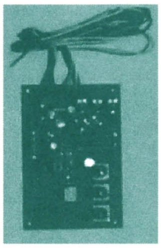

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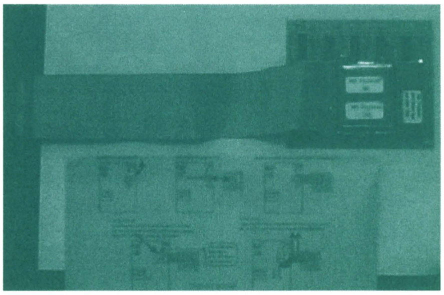

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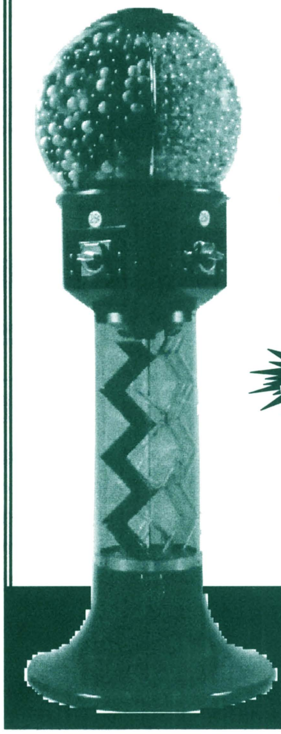

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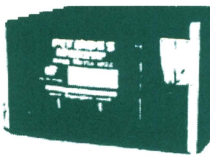

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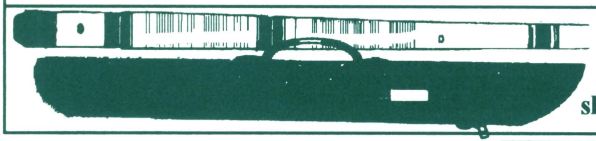

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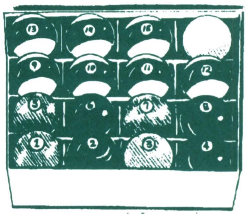

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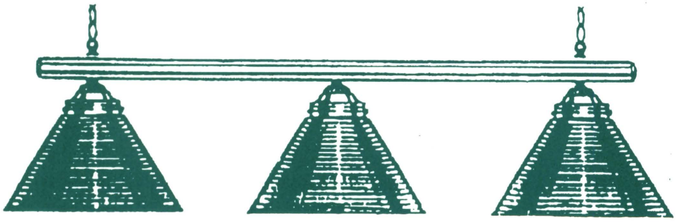

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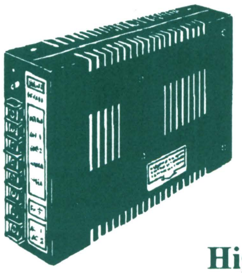

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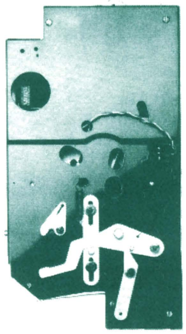

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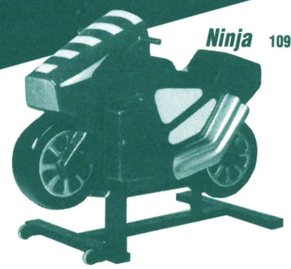

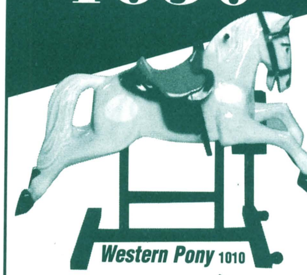

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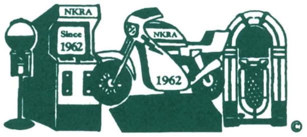

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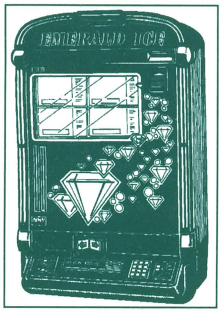

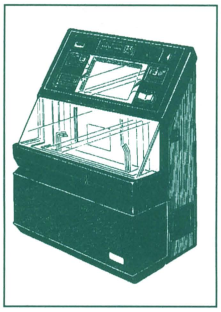

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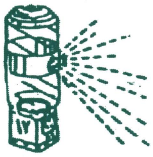

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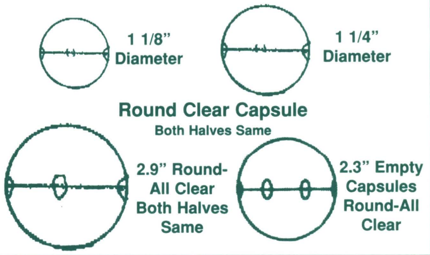

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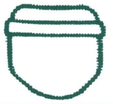

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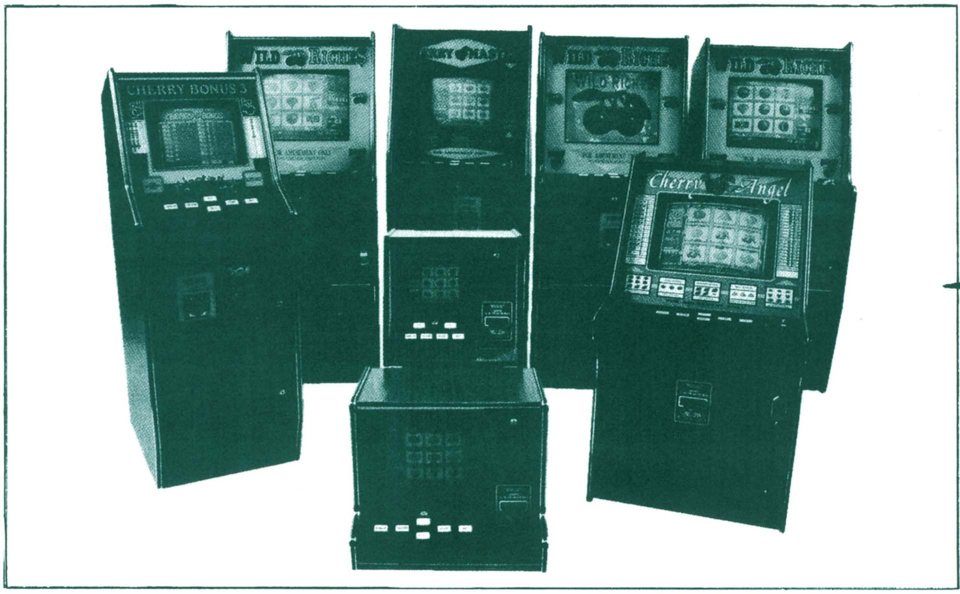

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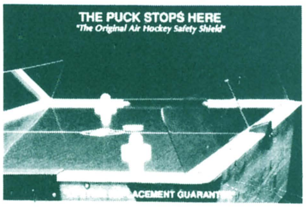

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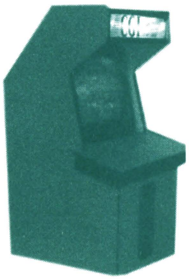

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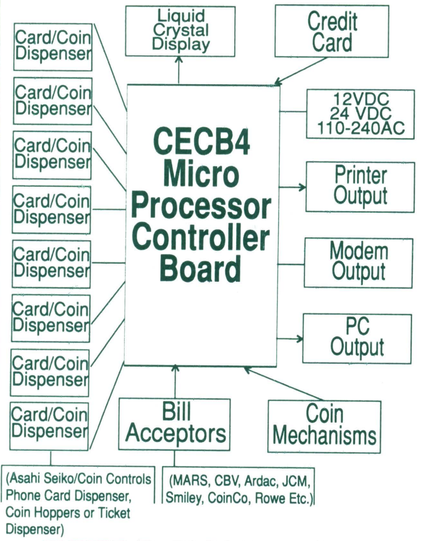
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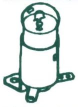

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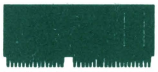

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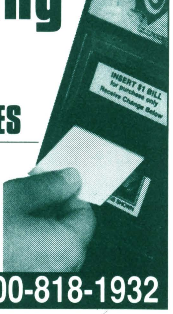

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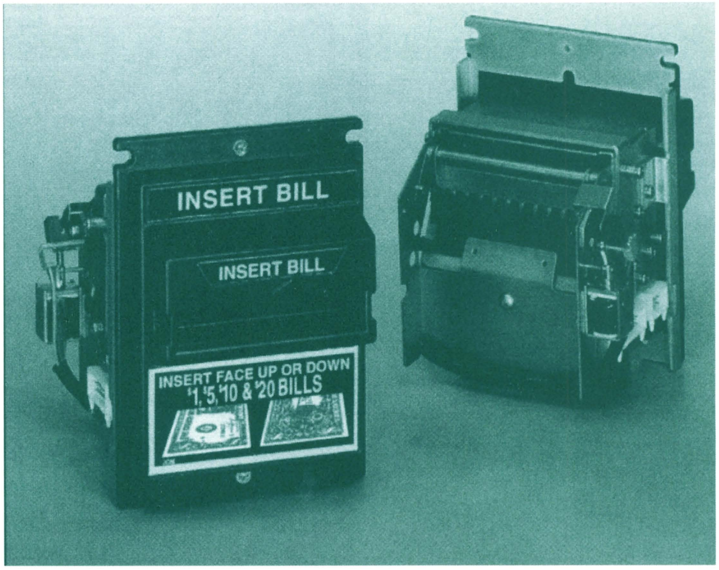
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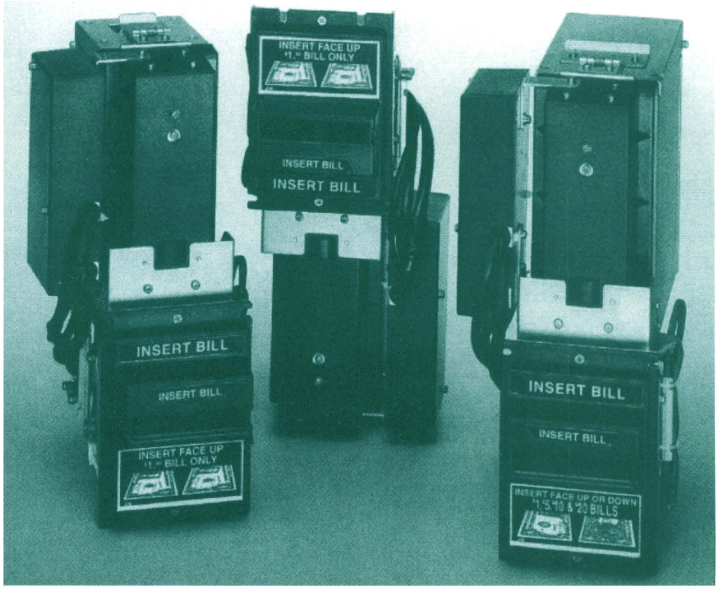
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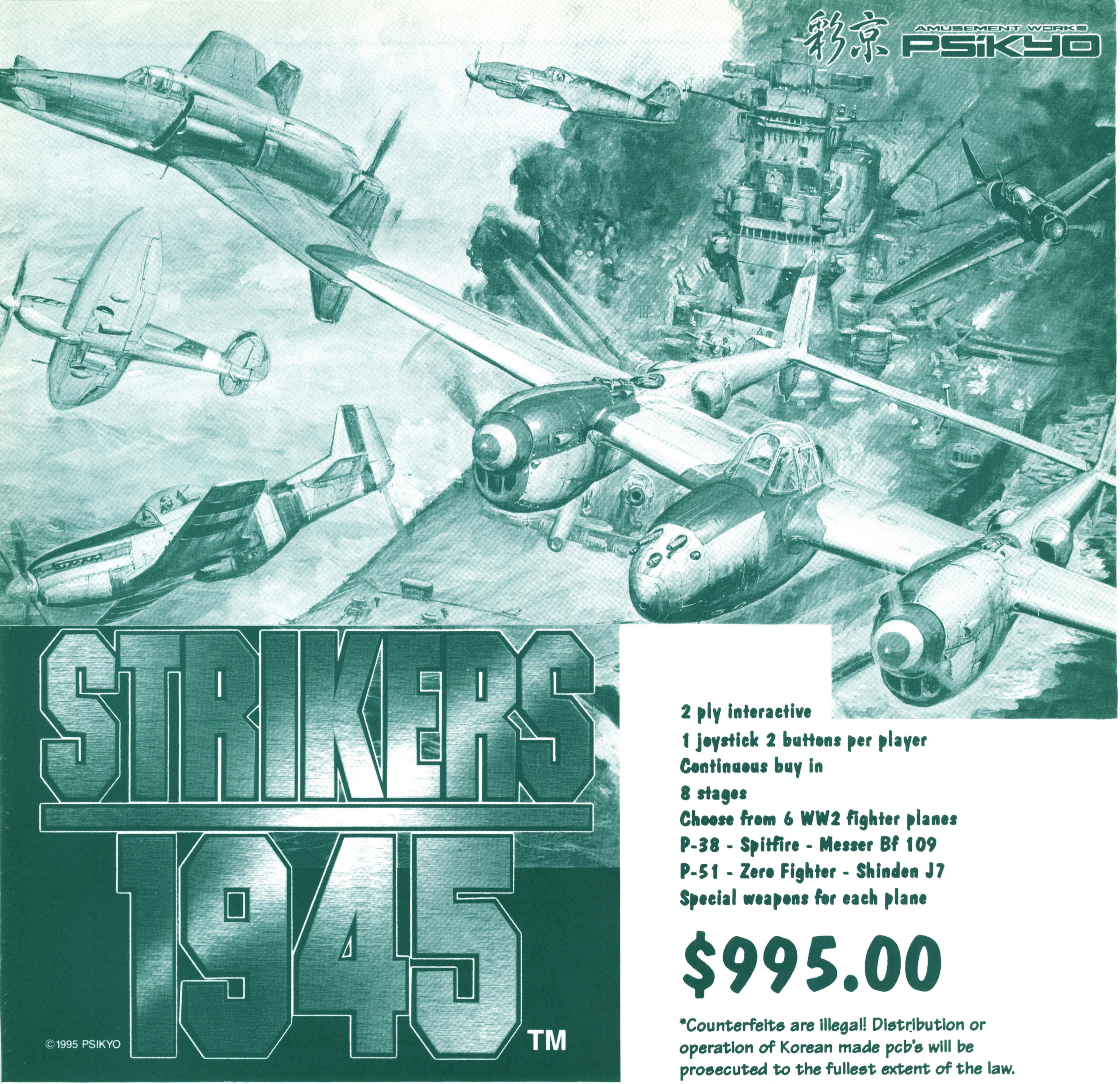

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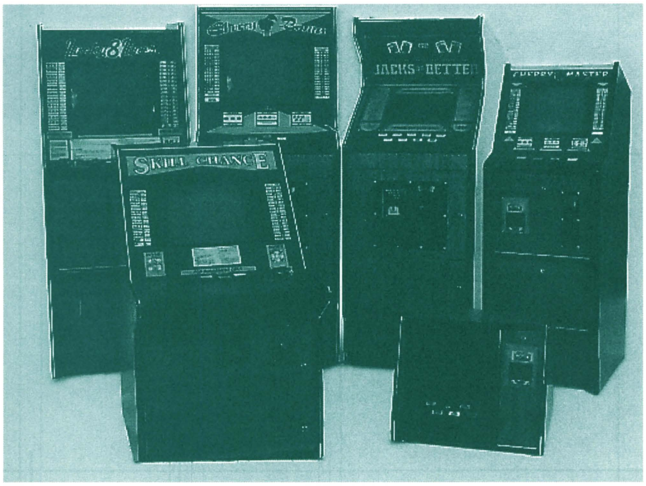

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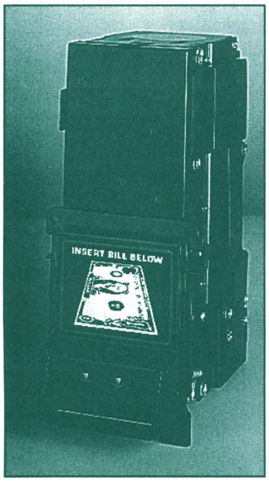

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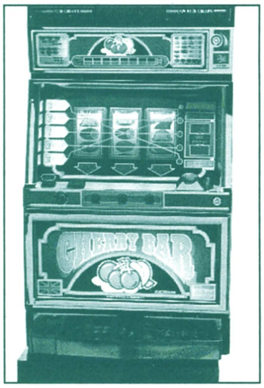

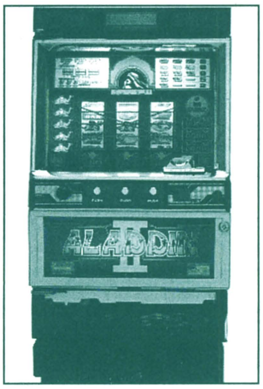

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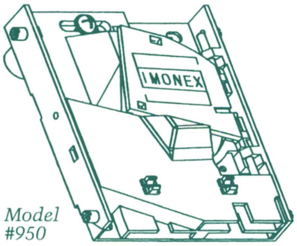

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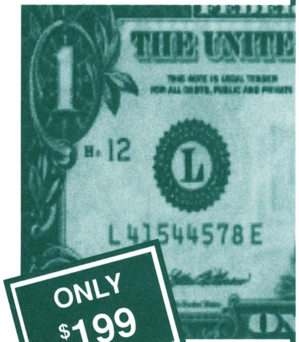

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	4	2	"Compilation"	Mexican Hot Hits Vol. 5
	5	0	"Animal"	Bronco
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	10	4	"Por Amor A Mi Pueblo"	Marco Antonio Solis Y Los Bukis
TROPICAL/SALSA	1	1	"Compilation"	Salsa Hot Hits
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June 14-16

National Council of Legislators from Gaming States Summer Meeting, Hyatt Regency Tech Center, Cherry Park, Denver, Colo. Contact NCLGS, (518) 449-4699; fax (518) 432-5651.

June 16-18

International Council of Shopping Centers Entertainment Conference, New York Hilton & Towers, New York, N.Y. Contact Phyllis Peterson, (212) 421-8181 ext. 351; fax (212) 421-6464.

June 21-23

Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association Annual Meeting, Oakbrook Hills Resort, Oakbrook, Ill. Contact ICMOA, (708) 369-2406; fax (708) 369-2488.

July 18-20

13th Billiard Congress of America International Trade Expo, Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, Minn. Contact Frank Zdy, (619) 278-3877; fax (619) 268-9372.

July 26-27

Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Machine Association Convention and Trade Show, Seven Springs Mountain Resort. Contact PAMMA, (800) 521-7778 in Pa., or (717) 232-5322.

August 12-14

Nightclub & Bar Expo, Omni Rosen Hotel, Orlando, Fla. Contact Nightclub & Bar Magazine, (601) 236-5510; fax (601) 236-5541.

August 15-17

Ohio Coin Machine Association Convention and Trade Show, Ramada University, Columbus, Ohio. Contact OCMA, (614) 888-9772; fax (614) 888-9767.

September 30-October 3

World Gaming Congress & Expo, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Alan Liebensohn, (212) 594-4120; fax (212) 714-0514.

September 26-28

Amusement and Music Operators Association Expo, Dallas Convention Center, Dallas, Texas. Contact AMOA, (312) 245-1021; fax (312) 321-6869.

October 9-12

6th Fun Expo, Sands Expo and Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Bailey Beeken, (914) 993-9200; fax (914) 993-9210.

October 19-21

World Waterpark Association Trade Show, Broward County Convention Center, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Contact Patty Miller, (913) 599-0300; fax (913) 599-0520.

For international events, see "International Scene."

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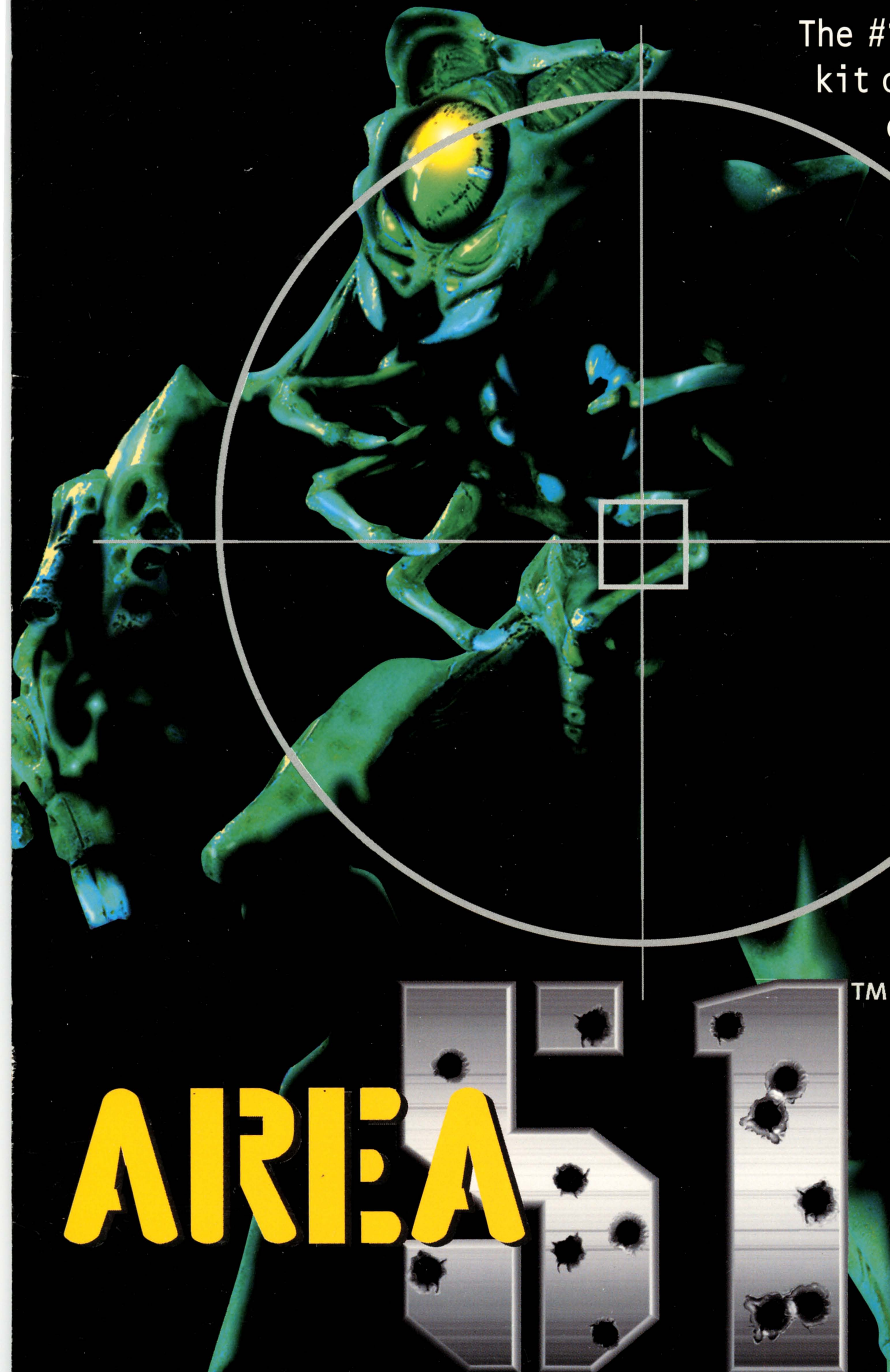

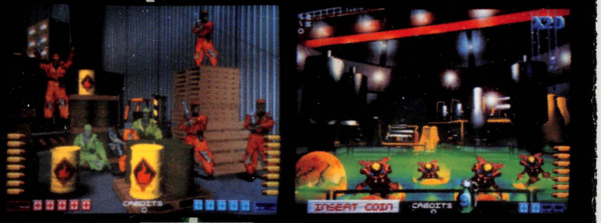

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